Hafa Adai!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Saipan Tribune

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OPINION METER
This week's poll:

Do you plan to have turkey this Thanksgiving?

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Plane crash fatality identified

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

» FAA investigators begin probe

Authorities have identified the lone fatality in Monday's plane crash as Lu Wei Lian, a 37-year-old female tourist from Shanghai, China, and her family is expected to arrive soon to claim her remains at the public hospital.

Lian was among the seven victims of the Monday accident when a Piper Cherokee aircraft operated by Star Marianas Air crashed at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport about 6:20am, soon after takeoff. The trip was bound for Tinian.

Lian was the only fatality.

See PLANE on Page 4

Time ticks for hundreds of parents of minor US citizens to leave NMI

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Hundreds of nonresident parents of minor U.S. citizen children have less than 40 days before the Dec. 31, 2012, expiration of their parole or they will no longer have lawful status to remain in the CNMI. Some of them are hoping that U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will have another Thanksgiving gift for them—this time at least a one-year parole extension.

During Thanksgiving last year, USCIS announced it will consider granting, on a case-by-case basis, one-year parole to those covered in Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan's (Ind-MP) H.R. 1466.

See PARENTS on Page 4

Loken is CNMI's 2013 Teacher of the Year

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Peter B. Loken, a sixth grade teacher at Garapan Elementary School, was named yesterday as the 2013 CNMI Teacher of the Year, which will allow him to travel and represent local teachers in national conferences in the U.S. mainland, including a meeting with President Barrack Obama at the White House next year.

Loken bested 18 other outstanding public school teachers in the Commonwealth to win the prestigious award. This was his first time to be nominated since joining the Garapan school in 2007.

Overwhelmed by the recognition, Loken said the honor is unexpected but also a source of pride and joy.

Loken was chosen by his GES peers in May to represent them in the statewide search for Teacher of the Year. He was adjudged among the top five finalists in September, resulting in competition judges visiting him for classroom observations.

Yesterday, Loken received his plaque of

See LOKEN on Page 4

Sixth-grade teacher Peter B. Loken, center, stands besides his wife Megan, left, and Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D., following the announcement yesterday that he is the recipient of the prestigious CNMI Teacher of the Year Award for 2013.
MONETH G. DEPOSA

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Local

HHS backs CHC submission to Medicare

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has confirmed plans to deploy a 10-member team of medical professionals to the Commonwealth Health Center to help the islands' public hospital comply with the requirements of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

In an email to corporation officials, HHS official Bradley Wolters said his office has written to CMS to supplement CHC's submission on what it is doing to remedy the two immediate jeopardy statuses slapped on the hospital in September.

"I wanted to…let you know that a letter was just transmitted to CMS informing that the U.S. Department of Public Health and Human Services, in partnership with the Department of the Interior, is planning on deploying a 10-member team of the Commissioned Corps to support the [Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.] in the near future," Wolters told corporation officials.

According to Wolters, the letter is intended to supplement the letters and documentation that the corporation transmitted to CMS Region IX office. The HHS letter was addressed to CMS officials Rufus Arther and Karen Fuller.

CMS earlier threatened to revoke CHC's participation in the Mediare program if it doesn't fix the problems identified by a visiting team in September.

Wolters, in the same letter to CMS, stated that the corporation has accomplished a lot in the last week to rectify the deficiencies identified in the CMS survey.

The corporation was given only until Nov. 19 to submit credible evidence of resolving the two remaining immediate jeopardy statuses: the Condition of Participation for Laboratory Services and Condition of Participation for Environment.

Arther, who is the CMS Division of Survey and Certification manager, earlier provided CEO Juan Babauta with a checklist of requirements that the hospital must accomplish on time.

For the immediate jeopardy status on laboratory services, CMS wants six convincing proofs that the concern has really been addressed. This status was slapped was due to failure to provide critical serum blood levels/laboratory tests including glucose, and failure to provide diagnostic tissue specimen processing (collection, preservation, transportation, receipt, and reporting).

CMS also requires six convincing documents for the immediate jeopardy status for the environment, which was slapped due to failure to maintain patient care supplies and equipment to ensure an acceptable level of safety and quality.

Submitted docs

Babauta confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* that all documents required by CMS were transmitted last Monday.

In his six-page letter to Arther dated Nov. 19, Babauta attached 20 documents that included payment made to Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics, a copy of the contract between CHCC and Siemens; and a copy of the contract between CHCC and Diagnostic Laboratory Services.

By submitting all these documents, Babauta said the corporation is hoping that the efforts made to remove threats to patients and correct noncompliance with the CMS' conditions of participation would abate the two remaining immediate jeopardizes.

The corporation was originally slapped with three immediate jeopardy statuses in September but one was recently marked "abated" by CMS after all requirements were met. This pertains to the defibrillators in the key units of the hospital.

Babauta said that, as of yesterday, the corporation has yet to receive a response from CMS. ***(Moneth G. Deposa)***

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Admin tells Fund to follow the law, lift suspension on refunds

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Fitial administration said Tuesday that the NMI Retirement Fund has to follow the law allowing members to withdraw their contributions, rather than continue to use as an excuse the government's non-remittance of employee and employer contributions to the pension agency.

This comes about a week after the Fund suspended the disbursement of checks until the federal court provides guidance on future releases.

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos said in an interview Tuesday that the Fund and the administration have different interpretations of Public Law 17-82. Inos, and later on, the Office of the Attorney General, said PL 17-82 does not require the Fund to return employer contributions; rather, it requires the pension agency to return employee contributions plus regular interest.

"If a member files for a termination of membership [to] withdraw, then to us that should be sufficient justification to stop deduction…They have to be refunded," Inos said in an interview on Capital Hill.

He said continued withholding would only result in additional money to be paid to the Fund, "which of course would have to be the case, only for the Retirement Fund to turn around and refund the CNMI."

Inos, who oversees the administration's pension reform and recovery efforts, said the administration is drafting legislation to further clarify the matter.

Hours after the interview, Inos' statement was backed up by a statement from the Office of the Attorney General, through assistant attorney general Gilbert Birnbrich.

The OAG said pursuant to P.L. 17-82, "the acting administrator has a ministerial duty to disburse employee contributions."

"The law does not give the acting administrator or the board the discretion to withhold the contributions of members who have elected to terminate their membership. The members have a right to receive those contributions, and the Fund does not have discretionary authority to suspend the disbursement of those contributions," the OAG said.

On Nov. 13, Fund trustee *ad litem* Joseph Razzano announced the suspension of the disbursement of checks until the federal court provides guidance on future releases, spawning concerns from hundreds of Fund members who have applied for and are waiting for their refunds.

Razzano, according to the OAG, asserts that the government is responsible for the trustee *ad litem*'s refusal to disburse employee contributions.

"But his assertion is unsupported," the OAG said.

"The [trustee *ad litem*] alleges that he is holding off on disbursing contributions because the government has not remitted employee and employer contributions. However, Public Law 17-82 does not require that the Fund return employer contributions; rather, it requires that the Fund return employee contributions plus regular interest," the OAG said.

It added that the Department of Finance promptly remits all employee contributions to the Fund within five business days after it runs payroll.

DOF's annual audits indicate that all employee contributions have been remitted to the Fund through fiscal year 2012. The OAG said in the course of conducting those audits, the government and the Fund have reconciled their employee contribution numbers and have agreed on the figures through fiscal year 2011.

"The Fund claims that it can account for all money actually paid by the government, but the government has not seen such an accounting. Moreover, the Fund's blanket assertion that the government has not paid all employee contributions is not supported by any specific numbers or documentation, and it is inconsistent with DOF's records," the OAG said.

The OAG said that on Aug. 22, 2011, Judge Kenneth Govendo ordered the Fund to (1) keep all employee contributions—approximately $100 million at the time—in reserve as required by Commonwealth law, (2) to refrain from using the contributions to pay other benefits or costs, and (3) to periodically update the amount held in reserves.

"If the Fund has complied with the law, it should be able to return the employee contributions to those members who have elected to separate from the Fund," the OAG said.

More than 1,700 Fund members have so far applied for refunds. Of this number, only 94 have so far received their checks.

Fitial extends CHC emergency anew

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial extended anew on Monday his executive order declaring a state of emergency for the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. but this time adding as a reason federal authorities' ultimatum for CHC to address identified deficiencies or its Medicare/Medicaid reimbursements will cease.

The governor also added as a reason CHC's deteriorating financial condition that affects its ability to maintain adequate infrastructure, equipment and personnel such that it is jeopardizing CHC's federal funding.

Fitial's Executive Order 2012-5, copies of which were distributed to lawmakers yesterday, continues to allow the governor to have direct control over CHC, suspend procurement laws or rules to address those emergencies and reprogram funds necessary to meet the emergency for at least another 30 days.

In his EO, the governor said a state of emergency is declared "due to the imminent threat of the disruption of critical medical services in the Commonwealth and the danger that such condition poses to the public because of the threat increase in otherwise preventable deaths that would result."

On the same day the governor extended the EO, CHC chief executive officer Juan Babauta said the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services agreed to deploy a laboratory director and a laboratory manager for CHC to address concerns of the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Besides CHC, also under a continued state of emergency are the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and NMI Retirement Fund. ***(Haidee V. Eugenio)***

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18th House officers named; vows Fitial impeachment

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Members of the incoming supermajority in the 18th House of Representatives caucused yesterday to select the officers led by soon-to-be Speaker Joe Deleon Guerrero (IR-Saipan) and the chairpersons of 11 of 12 committees, and they were united in saying they are "ready to impeach the governor" over allegations of corruption, felony, and neglect of duty.

Joining the caucus were officers of the coalition from so-called Independent Republicans and the Covenant Party, including Senate floor leader Pete Reyes (IR-Saipan), former lieutenant governor and representative Diego Benavente, and former speaker and Public Lands secretary Oscar M. Babauta, along with precinct chairmen.

Besides Deleon Guerrero, the coalition leadership also formally chose Rep. Frank Dela Cruz (IR-Saipan) as vice speaker and Rep. Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan) as floor leader.

Rep. Ray Tebuteb (IR-Saipan) will remain chairman of the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation.

"I was pleasantly surprised how smoothly it went. Our [coalition] chairmen (Reyes, Benavente, and Babauta) conducted the meeting. They have lots of experiences behind them in conducting caucuses. It went very smooth. There was a lot of cooperation. The commitment on everybody's part was there, there was no contentious issue," Deleon Guerrero told reporters in a briefing right after the caucus held at Monte Vista Restaurant on Navy Hill.

Deleon Guerrero said a Special Committee on Impeachment will begin preliminary work so that when the new Legislature comes in next year, they will be able to go full speed.

He said the panel will start reviewing the report prepared by the Special Committee on Impeachment he led. Deleon Guerrero is the main author of the resolution impeaching Gov. Benigno R. Fitial for 16 allegations of corruption, neglect of duty, and felony. The impeachment was defeated by the current majority aligned with the governor.

But because most of the elected and re-elected House members advocated impeachment and clean government, they said they are going to "finish what we started in the 17th Legislature."

Deleon Guerrero said the coalition will fulfill the mandate given them by voters: to remove the governor.

Dela Cruz said the coalition sees the urgency of the matter.

"We are ready to impeach the governor," Dela Cruz told reporters.

The incoming House officers said they will also be monitoring the movement in the Senate.

Committees

Reyes and Deleon Guerrero told reporters the chairpersons of the 11 standing committees and two special committees.

Rep. Tony Sablan (IR-Saipan) will be chairman of the Ways and Means Committee; Rep. Trenton Conner (IR-Tinian) will chair the Foreign and Federal Relations Committee; and Rep. Edmund Villagomez (Cov-Saipan) the Commerce Committee.

Deleon Guerrero said he offered the chairmanship of the Health and Welfare Committee to Rep. Janet Maratita (IR-Saipan), who is currently off-island. He said the officers would like to give Maratita until Nov. 30 to decide to either accept or decline the offer. Maratita earlier expressed interest in becoming vice speaker.

Only Maratita and Conner were off-island during the caucus.

Rep.-elect Cris Leon Guerrero will be chairman of the Judiciary and Government Operations; Rep.-elect Roman Benavente will chairman of the Education Committee; Rep.-elect Tony Benavente will chair the Natural Resources Committee; Rep.-elect Ralph Yumul will chair the Tourism Committee; and Rep.-elect Larry Guerrero will chair the Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications Committee.

The incoming speaker said if Maratita declines chairmanship of the Health and Welfare Committee, the post could go to either Rep.-elect JP Sablan or Rep.-elect Ton Agulto.

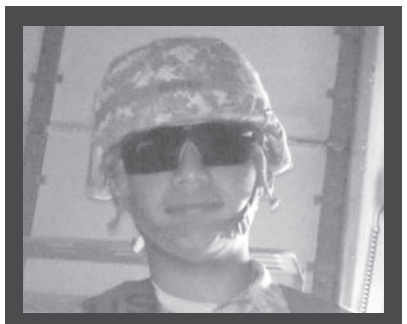
Deleon Guerrero also announced the formation of two special committees: The Special Committee on Retirement Fund Issues will be headed by Rep.-elect Mario Taitano, and the Special Committee on Impeachment.

The incoming speaker, however, said they have yet to make a decision as to who will lead the impeachment panel, although he said all the impeachment panel members from the minority side in the current House will still be on board. They include Deleon Guerrero, who headed the impeachment panel, Tebuteb, Sablan, and Dela Cruz.

He said they will also get members from the new minority of four.

In the Senate, most senators are honoring a so-called "gentleman's agreement" in early 2010 that the Senate presidency in the 18th Legislature will go to a senator from Tinian. However, the possibility of the governor's impeachment and conviction has become a source of internal leadership struggle.

Members of the incoming supermajority in the 18th House of Representatives caucus yesterday at Monte Vista Restaurant on Navy Hill.
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT

Happy 22nd birthday to a die-hard soldier and a very head on teacher, Michael Richer Pacia Berbes! It's your day, enjoy and relax. May your day be blessed with nothing but smiles! Love always, "Never Leave."
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PARENTS

From Page 1

H.R. 1466 seeks a grant of CNMI-only resident status for four groups of people, including immediate relatives of U.S. citizens who were on the islands as of May 8, 2008, and continuing to be on the islands.

"It would be a great Thanksgiving gift if USCIS extends my parole. My daughters are only 2 and 4 years old. If I am sent home, it would be difficult for the whole family especially my children," Jane Donesa, 37, told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

Donesa said she applied for an employment authorization document in September, which was released in October but is also expiring on Dec. 31. She said employers prefer those with EADs valid for at least a year.

A native of the Philippines, Donesa came to Saipan in 2007 supposedly to work at a garment factory but at the time, garment factories were already closing down. She ended up working as a house helper and lost that job because of economic reasons, she said.

"If they could only give us at least one-year extension, I know I could find a fulltime job by then," she said.

Violy Dawana said she's been praying that USCIS will extend her parole, for the sake of her 16-year-old son.

She said a one-year extension would make a big difference to their family's life.

"If there's no extension, we cannot do anything. I may have to leave my son with friends until he at least finishes 10th grade, then he would have to stay with me in the Philippines," said Dawana.

Sablan said he is "hopeful" that there would be parole extension for these individuals.

"We continue to reach out to DHS [Department of Homeland Security] but we haven't received any confirmation. I believe the decision is still being vetted. I prefer that we wait until they issue an announcement. But I don't see any reason why they cannot extend the parole," the delegate said.

Rene Reyes, president of Marianas Advocates for Humanitarian Affairs Ltd. or Mahal, said he's also appealing to USCIS to extend the parole for those covered by H.R. 1466 until action on an immigration bill about the CNMI is passed and become law.

"We're also hoping that all types of parole expiring on Dec. 31 will be extended, not only those covered in HR 1466," he said.

A parole allows certain foreign individuals to maintain legal status in the CNMI.

Parole is also given on a case-by-case basis to foreign workers whose transitional Commonwealth-only worker permit applications remain pending. This parole also expires on Dec. 31, 2012.

Reyes said he's hoping that Sablan would amend H.R. 1466 to include improved immigration status to long-term guest workers in the CNMI.

Right after the Nov. 6 elections, Sablan said re-elected President Barack Obama's focus on immigration reform will be good for the CNMI, adding that the immigration status of long-term foreign workers in the CNMI will continue to be on his agenda in the 113th Congress, including the re-introduction of a "more fair" or a "broader" version of his H.R. 1466.

Sablan said that a legislation that's been developed over time has a "place holder" that's specific to the CNMI. This means there's a provision in this particular immigration bill specific only to the CNMI.

PLANE

From Page 1

The plane's pilot, 26-year-old Korean national Jae Choi, was flown to a Manila hospital Tuesday for further treatment.

The other victims, who remain confined at the Commonwealth Health Center yesterday, are Chinese nationals Xiao Hwa Zhuo, Meiling Zhou, Xin Hong, and Xiu Hong Zhu. A Filipino national, 55-year-old Juanito Simitara, was discharged from the hospital on Monday.

Investigators here

Saipan Tribune learned yesterday that a two-member team from the Federal Aviation Administration arrived Tuesday night to lead the crash investigation.

Sources said that team members met with officials of the Commonwealth Ports Authority yesterday as part of the probe.

Star Marianas Air executive vice president Shaun Christian earlier said that federal investigators from both FAA and the National Transportation Safety Board are expected to arrive Tuesday night.

Star Marianas Air legal counsel Timothy Bellas also said Monday that the investigation may take some time and that results are not expected soon.

The NTSB is an independent federal agency that investigates every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation: railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline.

FAA is an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation that has the authority to regulate and oversee all aspects of civil aviation in the United States.

LOKEN

From Page 1

recognition from Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan Ed.D, and State Board of Education members after the traditional runaround during the Education Day celebration where they announce the "surprise" awardee.

Loken was also presented with a congressional commendation from Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP).

"I felt good about the whole process—the classroom visit and the interview I did. But I have no idea that they're coming here today [on campus]. I was really surprised!" Loken told reporters later.

Loken, 32, is father to a 5-month-old baby and is husband to Megan Loken, also a classroom mentor at GES. He obtained his bachelor's degree in psychology in Minnesota and moved to Saipan to join the public school's teaching workforce. Since relocating on island, Loken worked on his master's degree in education, which he finally received in May from the Framingham State University.

If given the opportunity to share about CNMI schools at the national level, Loken said he will talk about the many good things that are happening on the islands.

"There are so many great things in the CNMI and working with PSS is a fun and learning opportunity, not only for the kids but for teachers. For me, our community, the atmosphere, and culture is something you can't find elsewhere. I've traveled around quite a bit, and I can say…this is where I want to be and I want to stay," he said.

In this time of large class sizes in public schools, Loken bared his secret: "My teaching philosophy [because we have many students this year] is I try to help them teach themselves, which is beneficial not only to the classroom but for the rest of their lives because they learn to work with each other, learn cooperative skills, and team work," he said.

In an earlier interview with *Saipan Tribune*, Loken said he never fails to makes sure that each of his student is well informed that education is their responsibility and teachers are there just to provide guidance and assistance to make sure they will succeed.

Loken is the second teacher from GES to bag the overall award. Former fourth grade teacher Brenda Schultz also won the award for the school in 2003.

GES principal Paulette Sablan described Loken as a true educator who provides a lot of hands-on, meaningful, and inspirational types of teaching strategies to students. Loken, she said, is a real blessing for the Mallard family.

Interior's Babauta placed on administrative leave

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

U.S. Interior Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony M. Babauta has been placed on administrative leave this week, officials and other sources confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* yesterday. Some sources said that Babauta is being investigated by the Office of Inspector General related to travel spending and contracts, among other things.

Babauta

Press secretary Angel Demapan said the CNMI Office of the Governor received a phone call from the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs yesterday morning informing them that Babauta has been placed on administrative leave.

Demapan said Eileen Sobeck, U.S. Interior Deputy Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, has been designated acting Interior assistant secretary for insular affairs while Babauta is on administrative leave. Sobeck has been visiting the CNMI for years.

"We were surprised that he's on administrative leave. We don't know the allegations. But the [Fitial] administration respects the process. We just have to wait for the results [of the investigation]," Demapan said in a phone interview.

Demapan said the administration will continue to work with OIA on issues affecting the CNMI.

He said Gov. Benigno R. Fitial last spoke to Babauta prior to Veterans Day on Nov. 11, specifically on issues related to the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

Babauta is currently the highest ranking native Pacific Islander serving in the U.S. government. He is the first person of Marianas/Micronesian descent appointed by a U.S. President, the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs website says.

His office has oversight over U.S. insular areas such as the CNMI, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan (Ind-MP) said he's sorry to hear the news about Babauta being placed on administrative leave. He said when he returns to Washington, D.C., he expects to learn more about the matter.

Babauta, and others at the Interior, have yet to respond to requests for comment as of last night.

Other sources said the investigation could be more than travel spending and procurement.

Babauta last visited the CNMI in late October to early November, along with OIA director Nik Pula, on a host of issues including an Interior-commissioned report that zeroes in on the CNMI's mounting cumulative deficit of over $300 million, OIA-funded utilities projects and CHC.

President Barack Obama nominated Babauta in July 2009 and the U.S. Senate confirmed him in September 2009. Babauta is a native of Guam but spent much of his early childhood on the U.S. mainland before his family relocated back to Guam in 1982.

Judge wants comprehensive report on Retirement Fund

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Federal court designated judge Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood was not satisfied with the preliminary report submitted by the NMI Retirement Fund trustee *ad litem* and ordered Joseph Razzano to turn in a comprehensive report that would detail the overall status and condition of the pension agency.

In a two-page order yesterday, Tydingco-Gatewood directed Razzano to present the comprehensive report to the court and parties on Jan. 15, 2013, at 9:30am.

Razzano submitted the preliminary status report on Oct. 2 but, according to Tydingco-Gatewood, it raises further questions and concerns about the status of the Fund.

Razzano was ordered to include in the comprehensive report a general profile of the Fund's members and beneficiaries, outstanding employer contributions owed the Fund by the government and autonomous agencies, and legislative appropriations for the agency from the inception of the case.

The court also mandated the submission of a concise summary of the most recent actuarial report and audited financial statements, as well as all litigations involving the Fund and the status of any appeals.

Razzano also needs to provide the court a report on the administrative operations of the agency, including staffing patterns and needs as well as the effect of Public Law 17-82, which authorizes members to withdraw their contributions without separating from government. Tydingco-Gatewood also wants to know the number of applications received, approved, and/or rejected.

Razzano suspended last week the disbursement of refund checks, citing the continued failure of the government and autonomous agencies to remit both their employee and employer contributions to the agency. This has delayed the release of checks to hundreds of Fund members who have applied to withdraw their funds.

In a letter to Fund members last week, Razzano said the check disbursement will remain suspended until the federal court provides it guidance on future releases.

Over 1,700 members have applied for these refunds, of which only 94 have so far received their checks.

Despite the suspension, Razzano assured that the Fund will continue to process all applications.

The Fund earlier stated that it is capable of paying all refund payments as the court has already set aside $113 million for active members.

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Zoning pins hopes on new lawmakers

The Commonwealth Zoning Board and the Zoning Office are generally optimistic about the prospect of having two zoning-related bills move forward when the 18th Legislature takes office in January 2013.

The two offices struggled with outgoing lawmakers in their proposed text amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law of 2008.

Zoning also hopes to revive a local bill that seeks to remove poker arcades from residential areas.

"It looks like the 18th Legislature will be easy on us this time," said board chair Diego C. Blanco at Thursday's meeting, citing that the incoming batch of lawmakers is composed of the "Noble 9" or those who voted yes on the impeachment bid against Gov. Benigno R. Fitial.

Board member Bruce Bateman said he met with some lawmakers last month and was told that they were unlikely to look at the proposed zoning bills at that time.

"That was then. Right now, we probably have an opportunity," he added.

Vice chair Herman P. Sablan reminded his colleagues that the holiday season has kicked in, making it difficult to work on having the outgoing Legislature take action on the two proposed submissions.

Zoning administrator Therese T. Ogumoro said they would at least give it a try and approach the current lawmakers before the newly elected representatives take oath early next year.

"We hope the 18th Legislature will look into the removal of poker arcades as well as the text amendments as they've been gathering dust," said Blanco.

Meanwhile, the Zoning Office will finally have a signboard outside its office at the Joeten Building in Dandan within the month. ***(Clarissa V. David)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

'Trash-a-thon' for MHS Class of '83

The MHS Class of 1983 would like to invite classmates to a "Trash-a-thon" on Saturday, Dec. 1 and Dec. 8, 2012. For more information or details, call Tonnei Camacho at 483-9665. ***(PR)***

CHCC CEO on *Marianas Agupa*

Marianas Agupa will feature Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. CEO Juan N. Babauta on Saturday, Nov. 24, 2012, between 10am and 10:30am, to speak about the hospital's status with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services and its current financial standing. The show is from 9am to 11am on Magic 100.3 FM. Listeners are encouraged to call in and ask questions during the show (direct to studio at 234-5929 or use *Marianas Agupa* Facebook account via instant messaging). Simultaneous Internet streaming via www.magic100radio.com will be available. ***(PR)***

Zoning reminder on political signs, banners

The Zoning office is announcing a deadline of Nov. 23, 2012, for the removal of all political signs and banners along roadways, within public or private properties. The office further advises that failure to comply may result in the imposition of up to $1,000 per day until the day that such violation is corrected. For any questions or inquiry, call 234-9661 or visit the Zoning Office on the second floor of Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan. ***(Zoning)***

Military training on FDM

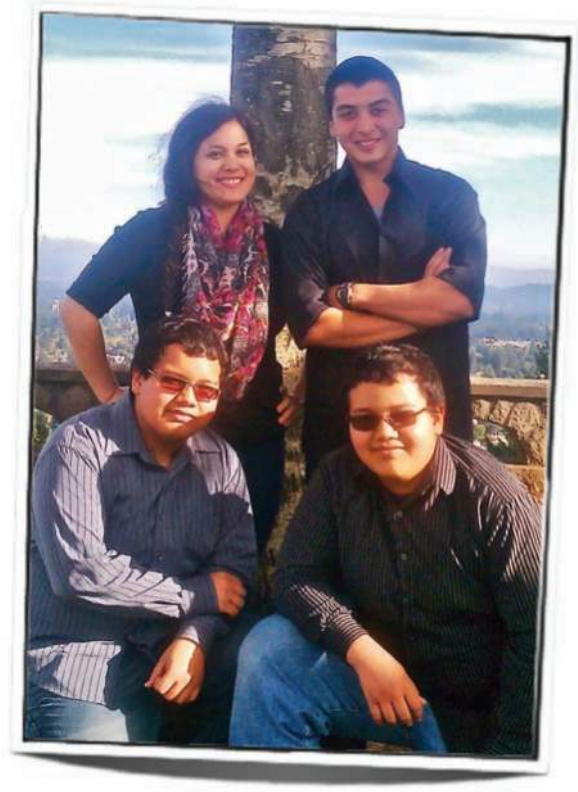
The U.S. military will be conducting exercises on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla on Nov. 29, from 12:30pm to 8:30pm, and on Nov. 30, from 9am to 12pm and 12pm to 8pm. The general location of this activity will be on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla training area (R7201) on a 10-nautical-mile radius on all quadrants. Due to the danger imposed by this activity, the Emergency Management Office is strongly advising the public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots, and marine tour operators—to stay away from this area during the time and dates indicated. ***(EMO)***

Dear People of the Commonwealth,

This Thanksgiving Day, like so many families throughout our villages and islands, Andrea, our families and I will sit down to share a Thanksgiving filled with family – and a few helpings of food too. And just as families do on Thanksgiving, we'll spend some time taking stock that we are thankful for the blessings of one another and for God's given bounty for the Northern Mariana Islands and for America.

Thanksgiving is also a holiday that captures that distinctly island impulse to give something of ourselves. We are therefore also very thankful, and mindful, that we have so many service men and women, and the military families who are in posts across the world fighting for our freedom and the protection of our borders.

And as we count our blessings this Thanksgiving Day, we count on the friendship, love and support of the people of our Northern Mariana Islands as a very special blessing.



Happy Thanksgiving Day!

Kilili

Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan

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More information and applications can be found at www.sablan.house.gov, or by calling 670-323-2647 in Saipan, 532-2647 in Rota, or 433-2647 in Tinian. Applications are due December 14, 2012.
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PDI charter flights to Rota up to 2014

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rota can expect an influx of Japanese tourists after Pacific Development, Inc. announced plans to continue its charter flights to the CNMI's southernmost island from 2013 to 2014.

This development comes within the same month that the tour company reached another milestone when its 50th charter flight recently landed in the Northern Marianas.

Company president Takahiro Tomie, who has been at the helm of PDI's operations since December 2011, informed Marianas Visitors Authority that he was able to secure another year for the charter flights with parent company Kinki Nippon Tourist Co., Ltd.

PDI ventured into the charter flight business five years ago, which succeeded with careful planning with Rota municipality officials and other government agencies that involved arrival of 150 passengers at the Rota airport.

Welcoming the charter flights has been a wonderful experience as the Commonwealth has many explored and hidden treasures that make it a must-see destination in the region, according to PDI, which touts the islands for its natural beauty, unique culture, and rich flora and fauna.

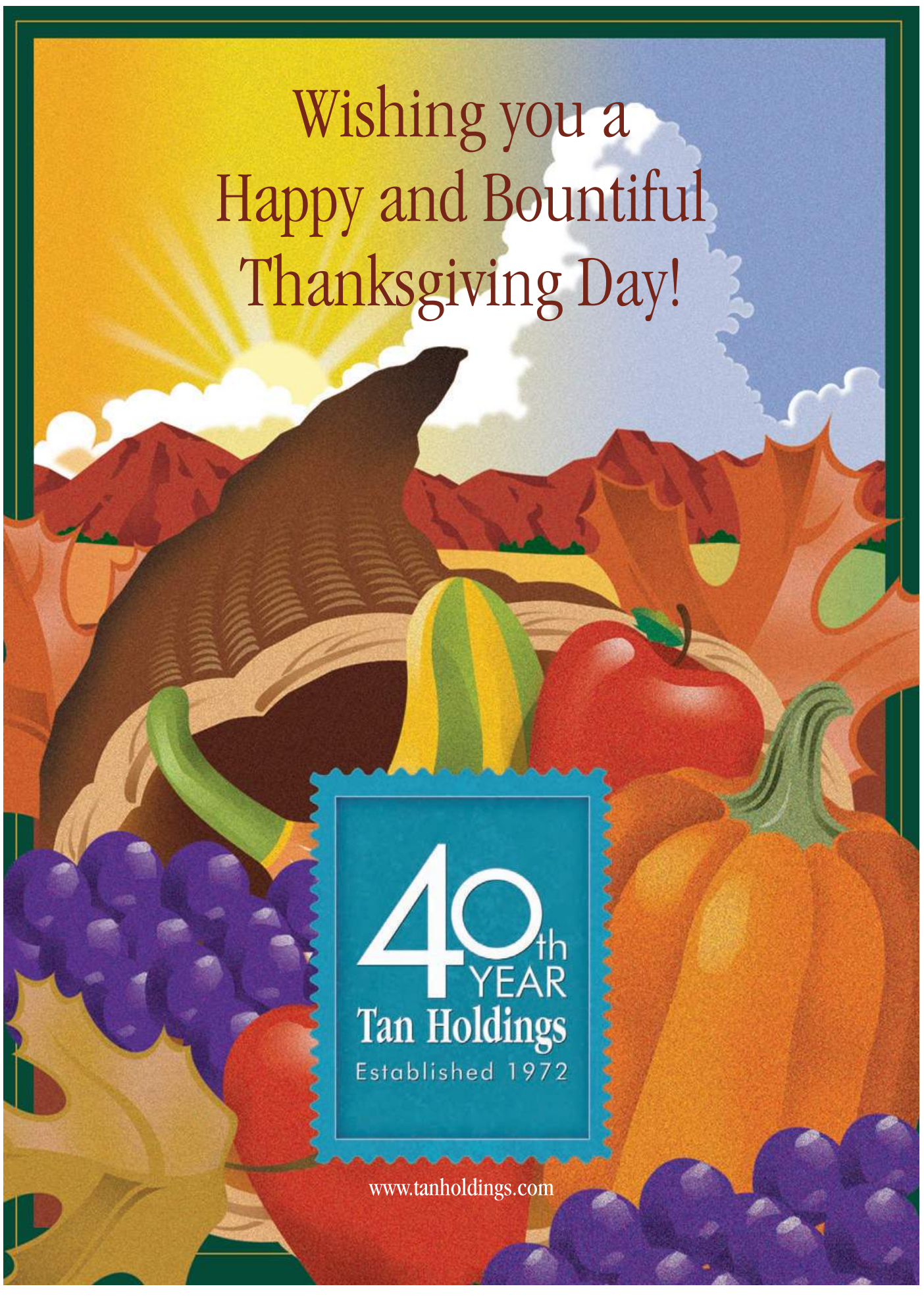
According to PDI, at least two full charter flights are already scheduled to arrive and bring in over 300 passengers as early as January 2013.

Tomie, who serves in his capacity for less than a year, said in a statement Tuesday that he is very pleased to work with Mayor Melchor A. Mendiola and other Rota officials, adding that a successful relationship between PDI and the local government would help expand the charter project in the future.

He extended his appreciation to the people of Rota, who were instrumental in their successful run of charter flights, which helped bring in participants for the 19th Rota Blue Triathlon this year.

Press secretary Angel A. Demapan, when asked for comment, said the Fitial administration is pleased by the continued support that PDI gives to the Commonwealth's tourism industry, adding that the decision to continue the charter flights to Rota is a gesture of their commitment to the islands.

"This announcement will undoubtedly prove beneficial for Rota and the Commonwealth given that the tourism activities that will result from these flights will continue to stimulate our economy," he told *Saipan Tribune*. "The administration commends PDI for taking this step to continue bringing our friends from Japan to the beautiful island of Rota."



Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Nov. 22, 2000

NMIRF turns to Teno for $6M

The Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund Board of Trustees yesterday asked Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio's help in securing some $6 million in funding so that it can retire its debt and set up the Group Health Life Insurance Program trust fund which will pave the way for the hiring of a utilization review firm. In a letter to the governor, Board Chair Vicente C. Camacho said students abroad as well as local residents traveling have been having difficulty due to refusal by health providers to honor the CNMI-government issued card as a result of untimely payments made for services rendered to eligible members.

Guam lawyer calls Mitchell 'irrational'

A Guam-based attorney has called suspended lawyer Theodore R. Mitchell irrational, abusive and does not serve the interest of his clients. In his affidavit submitted before the Supreme Court, attorney David J. Luan denied the allegations of Mitchell that he attempted to influence the panel of justices conducting the suspension proceedings on the beleaguered attorney before the high court. In fact, Mr. Mitchell called him up at his residence and tried to borrow money from him because he was already having difficulty financing the case. "I truly feel sorry for Mitchell for his obviously a very sick man. It is my understanding that Mitchell has a family and I hope for their sake that he seek counseling or other professional help to deal with his temper and irrationality," Lujan said.

Nov. 22, 2001

US funding sought for new projects

The Tenorio administration is set to ask the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for federal funds to be used for several infrastructure projects on Rota, Tinian and Saipan. In a notice sent to the public, Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio said that, around December 10, he will submit a request to the HUD for the release of federal funds under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 for the construction of various projects in the Commonwealth. The funding, called the Federal Community Development Block Grant, will finance $929,000 of the total cost of the projects.

'NMI needs anthrax-testing equipment'

The Department of Public Health is sending another suspicious substance to Guam for tests, in light of the anthrax scare that gripped Saipan in recent weeks. "We are working to figure out the best possible way to send them out," Health Secretary Jospeh Kevin P. Villagomez said. Emergency Management Office Director Gregorio DeLeon Guerrero said the CNMI's lack of equipment has caused problems in immediately detecting whether the substance is a bioterrorist weapon or not.

Nov. 22, 2002

OPA mulls outside auditor to probe local funds issue

The Office of the Public Auditor has already placed on the agenda of its upcoming Audit Committee meeting the request by Rota Mayor Benjamin Manglona for an audit of local funds. Although no decision has been made yet on what to do with the request, Public Auditor Michael S. Sablan said the committee will sit down next week for its regular bi-weekly meeting, during which they will decide on what action to pursue on the request. Sablan added, though, that there is a possibility that the OPA may just retain an independent accounting firm to conduct the audit on the local appropriations.

Babauta approves QC for Rota firm

Gov. Juan N. Babauta affixed his approval to the Qualifying Certificate application of a Rota-based water bottling company, which becomes the first recipient of the business incentive package on the island. Babauta's approval gives SEPC (Rota) Spring Water, Inc. a package of tax relief and other incentives afforded by the CNMI government to qualified businesses in the Northern Marianas. SEPC's QC application received final review from Attorney General Ramona Manglona yesterday. Under the Investment Incentive Act of 2000, certain types of businesses in the CNMI may apply for a Qualifying Certificate, and upon recommendation by the Commonwealth Development Authority and upon a favorable review from the Attorney General, the Governor may approve the QC application, giving tax breaks to that business for up to 10 years.

'BEASTS FOR BREASTS' CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

GetFit CNMI, LLC turns over a check to the Commonwealth Cancer Association as the benefactor of its fundraiser called "Beasts For Breasts." From left, CCA program manager Juan L. Babauta, CCA board members Jocelyn Songsong, secretary; Maggie C. Camacho, treasurer; Margaret T. Aldan, board member; David B. Rosario, CCA president; and GetFit CNMI, LLC owners/trainers Jose T. Quan, Jason T. Sablan, and Joey Tudela with media coordinator Bo Palacios. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Man'amko Christmas album is now a certified bestseller

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The "Man Amko' Christmas Album" is now a certified bestseller, having sold hundreds of copies just days since its Thursday release.

Saipan Seniors Advisory Council president Maria Salinas said Tuesday that as a result of the warm and enthusiastic reception of the public to their album, it will now be offered for sale in various locations on island.

Salinas said the holiday-themed album will also be sold at Marg's Kitchen, Tun Goru, Konbetsa Café/Walk in Closet, and Joeten Susupe, in addition to the Aging Office in Garapan where the album was initially made available.

She told *Saipan Tribune* that 225 copies of the album—nearly half of the 500 copies officially reproduced—have already been sold as of Nov. 20, and many have already made reservations for the album.

Salinas noted that Aging director Rose Mondala is among their most determined album sellers.

The 14-track album costs $15 each and features performances by Salinas, Paula Mereb, Maxie Mereb, Vicenta Rosy, Ann M. Perry, Ana Nakatsukasa, Benjamin Norita, Vicente "Sirampi" Laniyo, Jacoba Asuncion, Tereseta Sorroza, Meryalen Conrad, Terry Sitae, Floria James, Jesus B. Pangelinan, Manuel Mesa, Mila Garin, Teodoro Guiao, Natividad Borja, Alejandra Blas, Benita Cepeda, and Fidel Alomia.

The album, which contains holiday staples sung in different languages, also features performances by Tommy Boy Atalig, David Dre Manglona, and Aging program coordinator Walter Manglona.

All proceeds from the album sale would go to the councils' coffers to help improve programs at the center such as purchasing more exercise equipment to keep the *man'amko* fit and healthy.

Meanwhile, the Office on Aging will be serving not just lunch but also breakfast for clients at the Aging Center beginning next week.

Salinas said this is welcome news for the island's elderly.

She disclosed that because of the implementation of austerity measures last fiscal year, Aging staff had to stop serving them breakfast.

At one point, the *man'amko* were only served juice for their morning meal, she added.

Many of the seniors said they ought to be served breakfast since federal funding provides enough to pay for the meal.

Two trained volunteers from Red Cross help crash victims' kin cope

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The American Red Cross-NMI Chapter joined in the efforts to provide assistance to the victims and their family members of Monday's plane crash.

Executive director John Hirsh said Tuesday that the accident immediately activated their network of trained volunteers.

A Star Marianas aircraft bound for Tinian with six passengers plus a pilot crashed early Monday morning at the runway of Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, killing one female Chinese tourist.

Hirsh went to the crash site to assist first responders while other Red Cross staff and volunteers manned their emergency operations center at the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting building.

Two social workers, Janet McCullough and Lynn Corella, went to the hospital to be with family members of the crash victims. The two, who will be spending some time with the family members, were assisted by a Chinese translator provided by Tan Holdings, to help them communicate with the tourists' kin.

Hirsh explained that when someone experiences a tragic event in their life, it involves a lot of emotional issues such as the stress brought by and being able to make sense of the incident, and being aware of coping mechanisms that could help them through the ordeal.

He said Red Cross' social workers are professionals, specializing in working with families and understanding their emotions, helping them connect with their loved ones back in their home countries, and being "culturally appropriate" in dealing with the situation.

Since it wasn't a large-scale aviation disaster, Hirsh said there was no need to create a respite center where family members come in and seek assistance.

Hirsh said Red Cross would continue to help the survivors and their families as part of the follow up support phase.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Requiem for the Twinkie?

The news that the company making Twinkies, Ding Dongs and Wonder Bread is preparing to liquidate touched off a blame game among Americans shocked that these iconic products are in danger of going away forever.

The move last Friday follows a strike that began Nov. 9 by the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union. It refused to swallow additional wage and benefit concessions to keep the bankrupt Hostess Brands afloat. Its 5,000 members were nearly unanimous in rejecting the company's final contract offer.

As a result, the company said, most of the 18,500 Hostess employees will lose their jobs. That includes members of the largest union, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, which did agree to the company's concession demands. Hostess Brands Inc. was in a New York bankruptcy courtroom Monday to start the process of selling itself.

The bakery union's self-defeating refusal to accept financial reality is only part of the story however. For Hostess, the strike was the final blow of many. High commodity costs hurt the company. Not only did it pay a fortune for food ingredients, but also for the energy to run its facilities and fuel its delivery trucks.

The recession hurt too. Hostess was unprepared to meet difficult business conditions that prevailed in 2009, when it emerged from a previous bankruptcy reorganization in which it obtained big concessions from its workforce. It had been, in fact, a poorly managed company for a long time. A string of short-sighted executives were quick to take money out of the business and slow to make the capital investments it needed to stay competitive.

Perhaps most damaging, the company failed to innovate in response to changing consumer tastes. Hostess didn't have to make Ho Ho's out of tofu to stay relevant. Food companies such as Kraft, Sara Lee and Nabisco have long understood their success depends on sophisticated market research, product development and creative marketing. It doesn't come cheap.

They also must update their product lines constantly to keep their customers—many of them increasingly health-conscious—satisfied.

There is no guarantee that any particular brand will survive. Yes, even golden, cream-filled Twinkies snack cakes could go extinct. As one analyst told the Reuters news service of the Twinkies brand, "It's iconic, but in the same way that the great Studebakers are iconic."

Reports circulated Friday of Twinkies being auctioned for as much as $10 apiece online. Not bad for an obsolete hunk of popular culture. It is sobering to note that today's Twinkies have a much longer shelf life than the company that made them.

©2012 Chicago Tribune

Who's the new guy? He looks kind of weird to me.
He said he just needed a place to hang until after Thanksgiving.
Wings?
duffyink.com
DUFFY

TGIT-Day

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara (jrvergarajr2031@aol.com) is a former PSS teacher and is currently writing from the campus of Shenyang Aerospace University in China.

Three perspectives underlie the structure of Christian thought in the last two millennia. The most familiar one is transcendence where paradise in the metaphor of heaven is located elsewhere than where we currently are. Then there is earthly immanence, the transformation that occurs when one unconditionally embraces the fullness of life in the here-and-now. The third is the spirit of freedom, transparent exercise of responsibility in the realm of finite historical choices.

In ritual, these perspectives were intoned in the medieval formula of naming realities, "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost!" In current parlance, that would be rehearsing the role of the Terminator, the Transformer, and the Turkey!

Human civilization ritualizes certain events like the culmination of a harvest, the completion of a monumental task, or just the satisfaction over the passing of a crisis. Gratitude is a garden variety of human virtue. It joins other modes of affirmed consciousness in the practices of personal confession, societal petition, and relational intercession, long observed in prayerful communities.

We tarry along the religious path of this national holiday because most Americans gather around family tables this day in the mythology of the first perspective. In such spirit began the annual celebration after Abraham Lincoln in 1863 proclaimed a national day of "Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in Heaven."

Brownscombe's 1914 painting of Plymouth settlers feasting with natives has become a familiar visual to accounts. Historians tell of 53 Plymouth settlers and 90 Indians holding a three-day feast after the settlers survived their first year of harsh winter. (Revisionists point out that narratives, at least, need to acknowledge how the native residents were later turned into targets on T-day's turkey shoots!)

FDR nailed the date down to the fourth Thursday of November, to settle the uncertainty of day on those years when there are five Thursdays in November. Not all states complied. It became a joke that when there were five Thursdays, observance on the fourth made it Democratic while on the fifth, Republican.

The celebration has commercially evolved into a season of shopping, marked by Macy's Parade, merrily rolling down the store aisles until way past New Year, with the apex reached with Santa's gifts under the Tannenbaum bought and wrapped before Christmas eve. The intrusion of the dollar into the equation watered down the religious emphasis, specifically made Christian in the presidential proclamations of Presbyterian pastor's son Grover Cleveland and staunch Methodist William McKinley.

Gerald Ford made the day totally secular, skewing previous references to providence in his proclamation. The media was not pleased. Ford lost the next election. Ronald Reagan chuckled over "pardoning" the proffered turkey, and George H. W. Bush made the practice a permanent fixture in the annual presidential ritual. Bill Clinton emphasized gratitude to those who serve to promote the American vision and implement its mission. George W. Bush took the task of international peace into the war room on terror after 9/11. Obama was criticized for not thanking "God" in his proclamation of 2011. American sentiment shifted. Obama got re-elected.

Along with many college and professional sports events, holiday movies get a Thanksgiving premiere to test their weight at the box office. The pumpkin pie remains a dinner staple but the contest is in the field on the biggest and heaviest variety raised. Meanwhile, the wild turkey joins the list of endangered species. The t-bird that graces holiday tables lost its thunder and smell, coming from coops where they are fattened for weight. The meat hardly emits the familiar fragrant fowl flavor and aroma characteristic of the wild bird in the prairies now relegated to the trademark of a bourbon.

Thanksgiving Day in China has all the trappings of Western commercial symbols devoid of historical moorings. On Saipan, we render obeisance to providential divinity in the cosmic realm. It is a matter of course but irrelevant. In my campus building, gratitude is echoed by the *Anshallah* of Muslims from Africa, the Middle East, South-Southeast Asia who share my building's morning elevator ride with their gracious salutations of *Salaam Malaikom!* Grace drapes the diversity.

Save for a lone Protestant evangelical, we do not see much of the transformative messianic impulse, amazingly gracious or otherwise. The once "puritanical" CPC battles corruption within its ranks, with President Hu Jintao declaring at the recent Party Congress that if the practice is not curtailed, it will be the death knell of the Party and the government in the next decade. The hyperbole on service reminiscent of Mao's vaunted service is met by a skeptical smirk. The current gap of income distribution is deep and wide. That's all that seem to matter in a newly affluent and resurgent China.

The Terminator remained with Ahnold in California. The Transformer is still a toy but got animated in the fight between the Autobots and the Decepticons. As for my gobble gobble, I will stick with the turkey!

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Israel's failed strategy

By DAOUD KUTTAB
Los Angeles Times

Daoud Kuttab is a Palestinian journalist and former professor of journalism at Princeton University. He wrote this for the Los Angeles Times.

JERUSALEM—For years, Israelis have embraced a theory of "deterrence" with respect to the Gaza Strip. The idea is that if Gazans feel enough pain, they will refrain from attacking Israel. But this kind of strategic deterrence simply doesn't work. Instead, Gazans react to the huge suffering and pain inflicted by Israel with a greater determination to inflict pain on their attackers. Furthermore, deterrence without any possibility of a political settlement ensures that this madness will go on indefinitely.

In explaining the Israeli theory, Moshe "Bogie" Yaalon, Israel's minister of strategic affairs, said last week that "if the terror organizations do not cease their fire, we will be prepared to toughen our response as much as necessary, until they say 'enough!' " Interior Minister Eli Yishai proclaimed, "We must blow Gaza back to the Middle Ages."

It's not hard to believe that's what the Israelis have in mind. Using their strategic military advantage, they have bombarded Gaza during the last week from the air, ground and sea. The majority of the more than 100 Palestinians killed so far have been noncombatants, including children. At least nine Palestinians representing three generations of the Dalu family were wiped out when Israel shelled their Gaza City home.

Israel has said its goal is to attack those who are launching missile attacks. But its actions seem almost certain to produce a new crop of militants eager to launch a new round of attacks.

Some security strategists and "just war" theorists argue that deterrence can be morally acceptable in cases in which it doesn't directly affect the lives and welfare of the civilian population. But when deterrence becomes indistinguishable from collective punishment, it is far harder to justify, and far less likely to achieve its intended result.

Palestinians say that their rocket attacks are acts of self-defense against the punishing land and naval blockade Israel has imposed on Gaza since 2007. The killing of civilians by either side can't be condoned, and it's true that Gazan missile attacks have killed several Israeli civilians. But Israel's recent military actions have been shockingly disproportionate, aimed at densely populated areas in which besieged Gazan civilians have no place to escape the overwhelming and exaggerated Israeli firepower.

The spiraling violence on the part of Israel and of Gazan militants (whose rockets have reached the outskirts of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv) indicates that deterrence is failing, or that, at best, its effectiveness is deteriorating. At the same time, the cost in terms of both human lives and deepening hatred continues to escalate.

What makes Israel's "strategic deterrence" approach most unworkable is that it is being employed without a comprehensive plan that includes a political component. By refusing to politically deal with those in power in Gaza, Israel is seeking a solely military solution to what is mostly a political conflict.

Hamas military leader Ahmed Jabari, who successfully delivered on a 2011 prisoner exchange with Israel, was assassinated last week along with his son after a 24-hour lull in the conflict that was based on an unwritten understanding. Immediately before his assassination, Jabari was said to have been preparing a reply to an Israeli offer for a long-term cease-fire. Many have seen his killing as a sign that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, perhaps with the upcoming Israeli elections in mind, is not interested at the moment in de-escalating the conflict.

The absence of a political horizon removes any incentive for the Palestinians in Gaza to stop their attacks. The Israeli military operation is taking place just before the United Nations General Assembly will be asked to recognize Palestine as a nonmember state that lives alongside Israel. In 1947, the Jews of Palestine and Tel Aviv celebrated a similar resolution recognizing their own statehood, but today's Israeli leaders seem bent on denying Palestinians the right to have their own independent state.

Perhaps the worst part of this deterrence strategy is that it places no importance on the long-term relationships between Israel and its Arab neighbors. After being forced from their land in 1948 and again in 1967, and pushed into a mere 22 percent of the original boundaries of Palestine as established by the British, Palestinians are intent on not retreating further. This means that Israelis and Palestinians will need to find a formula to live side by side going forward.

A relentless and aggressive policy that harms innocent people doesn't serve the long-term good and should not be condoned by the international community, including the United States.

Here's what Obama needs now

By PETER GOLDMARK
Newsday

Peter Goldmark, a former budget director of New York State, is a member of the State Budget Crisis Task Force. He wrote this for Newsday.

After a hard-fought election, the weeks that follow should include some quiet reflection by the winner. As President Barack Obama takes stock of the damage superstorm Sandy inflicted in our part of the country after his visit here last week, I am sure he'll also be doing some quiet thinking about how to approach his second term.

A large majority of us want Obama to succeed, including many who voted against him. We need him to succeed, because we're in trouble.

First, the administration needs a thorough restaffing. With one exception, the president's heavy reliance on former elected officials as Cabinet officers in the first term did not work out well. Ken Salazar of Interior and Ray LaHood of Transportation, for example, are wonderful people, but they didn't get a whole lot done.

And there is a lot to do. It's clear that the executive branch will have to do a good chunk of it without much help from a divided Congress. So this calls for broad-gauged, tough leaders with executive experience to manage the transition to a new health insurance structure, mount a national program of capital investment in infrastructure, continue the good work started in education, and get us moving on reducing carbon emissions and creating jobs by investing in energy efficiency.

The one bright exception among the previous elected officials serving in the first term was Hillary Clinton. Filling the former senator's shoes will require someone who can deal in levelheaded terms with China; bring shrewdness, restraint and toughness all at once to dealing with Iran; move us forward on international global warming agreements; and strengthen our ties with Europe, which have been neglected. This will be the single most important appointment the president makes, and I hope he will take his time and get this one right, not lunge and appoint some of those in the front row who are waving their hands.

Second, we need to frame and begin implementing an integrated, low-carbon, pro-growth national energy policy. If the feds help, the states can lead the way in a far-reaching energy efficiency retrofit program and modernize the electricity grid to make us more competitive globally. And the president can, by executive action, change immediately the outdated regulations that block use of alternative fuels that can compete with gasoline and prevent us from retrofitting the existing vehicle fleet to use cheaper, cleaner, American-produced fuels. The price of petroleum is high and will go higher, and has become a heavy tax on poor and middle-income families who can't cut back their driving without threatening their jobs.

But at the top of the agenda is work on a serious plan to balance the federal budget. By definition, such a plan will avert our tumbling over the fiscal cliff. That means some tough cuts, including defense, but also adding a capital infrastructure program to generate new jobs and economic growth at the same time we are taking in our belts. Most of us understand that a realistic plan must include some tax increases. The president should draw up the plan with advice from business leaders and thoughtful Republicans and then go out and campaign for it. It will not pass on the first shot. But we citizens understand we're in trouble. If the president keeps the issue in front of us and relentlessly exposes the sham arguments the right wing puts up that keep us from balancing the budget, we can get there.

To do this, Obama will have to be a lot more effective than he has been in battling the retrograde right-wingers. He will have to get angry. And he will have to take a page from FDR's book and learn how to use the ultimate weapon against them: ridicule. He will have to explain, in vivid terms that the average citizen can understand, that the right-wing plan to deal with a sinking ship boils down to drilling more holes.

The stakes are enormous. The president will set the tone and the odds of success or lack thereof for his second term in the first months of the new year. We need to support him as he changes his game plan.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

My dear people of Tinian

This week is indeed a week of Thanksgiving and it is the most appropriate time to be thankful.

I am truly humbled and honored by your resounding votes of confidence in electing me as your senator on Nov. 6, 2012. Elections and campaigns are never easy. They require time, dedication, conviction, hard work and many times a clash of ideals and beliefs between friends and families. This election and its result could never have happened without all of you, your support, and your belief in me. I would like to thank the large number of volunteers who helped prepare everything and anything every campaign gathering. I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge all of the people who contributed to the campaign, both material and financial, for it is through their donations that our campaign stayed afloat. To those who opened their homes to Bernie and I as we canvassed around the island, we are blessed by your kindness. I am especially grateful and proud of the large numbers of *manhoben* who came out and were active voices in this campaign. Seeing such passion and courage from many young voters reminds me to work just as hard and be just as vigorous the moment I take office. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to the people who were not able to vote this election, but offered support and prayers throughout the campaign.

As mentioned earlier, the divide in elections can be difficult. However, what continues to make us a strong people is the spirit of *Inafamaolek*. No matter how the results turned out to be, the fact remains that we all have a shared interest in our island. It is time to focus on those interest and the issues that are facing Tinian. I am asking everyone to come together and in the spirit of progress, help Tinian move forward.

They say that duty is heavier than a mountain, and it is the weight of that duty that will keep me grounded in my obligation to the people of Tinian. The public trust you have placed on me again will be my inspiration as I attend to my duties as your senator.

Again, thank you very much, *si yu'us ma'ase, ghilisow,* and *maraming salamat po!* Happy Thanksgiving!

Senator-elect Francisco Manglona Borja (Ankie) and family
Tinian

Food for thought

This is in reply to the letter of Mr. Sid Kani of As Matuis, as it appeared on the *Saipan Tribune* and *Marianas Variety* on Nov. 20, 2012. My take on Mr. Kani's letter is that I think we have already passed the stage for the Legislature and the governor to negotiate on any issue of concern to the citizens of the CNMI. If this is a cancer, the cancer is probably on Stage 4 already and no amount of "drinking milk" will rectify the cancer. I say let's operate on the cancerous cell and remove it from the body of the CNMI so the CNMI can begin to heal.

I believe the lieutenant governor has drunk a lot of milk, meaning he is healthy and uncorrupted. Now we can all move on with the "cleansing" of the government by getting rid of all the unproductive, narrow minded, tunnel visionaries, no-foresight individuals, and deadwood politicians, along with all the political appointees and unqualified individuals leeching on public funds. Let us start a new way of governance and I assure you that good things will start to happen here on our islands.

I hope all the deadwood unemployed "politicians" will not initiate a stampede up to Capitol Hill to fill in an application form to "leech" off the government's public funds. Enough is enough. Get it?

Ray Bermudes
Dandan, Saipan

The Weather

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly sunny with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Thundershowers	▲87	▼78
Palau	Showers	▲86	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲89	▼77
Chuuk	Mostly Cloudy	▲86	▼78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲87	▼74
Kosrae	Showers	▲87	▼74
Majuro	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼80

Around The Globe

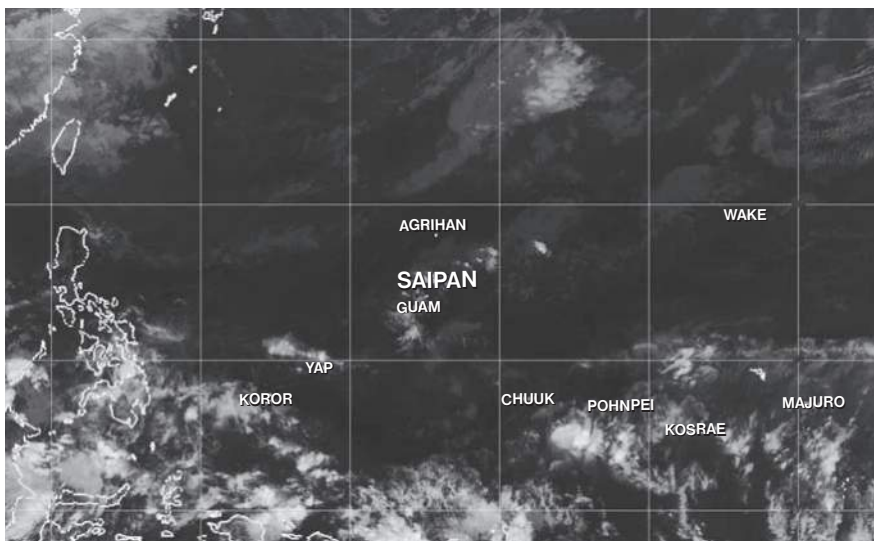
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲68	▼56
Beijing	Sunny	▲44	▼26
Hong Kong	Thundershowers	▲77	▼66
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲79	▼69
London	Rain	▲49	▼37
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲73	▼53
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲88	▼77
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲78	▼50
Miami	Sunny	▲75	▼55
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲53	▼36
Osaka	Showers	▲56	▼49
Paris	Showers	▲51	▼42
Pusan	Windy	▲56	▼40
Rome	Cloudy	▲64	▼50
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲50	▼42
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲65	▼49
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲44	▼30
Tokyo	Showers	▲59	▼47
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲57	▼40

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:13 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
8:29 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.5 Feet
3:15 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
10:05 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.6 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2012

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from low pressure centered near Iwo To island at 25N150E to 18N140E then continues as a shear line to beyond 16N130E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are along and up to 200 miles northeast of the cold front. Patchy clouds and rain are along and up to 100 miles north of the shear line. Another shear line curves across the Mariana Islands from 13N144E to 16N146E to 18N154E. Scattered showers are within 75 miles of the shear line. A weak circulation south of Koror is near 4N134E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms near Koror are within 60 miles of a line from 7N134E to 7N130E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are south of a line from 3N130E to 4N137E to EQ153E. A surface trough southwest of Pohnpei and Kosrae runs from 5N155E to 2N163E. Scattered showers a few thunderstorms are within 75 miles of 5N156E. Trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers between Kosrae, Majuro and Tarawa to the south of a line from 5N166E to 5N173E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:22 AM	5:44 PM
Friday	6:23 AM	5:44 PM
Saturday	6:23 AM	5:44 PM
Sunday	6:24 AM	5:44 PM
Monday	6:24 AM	5:44 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	1:22 PM	12:56 AM
Friday	2:01 PM	1:46 AM
Saturday	2:40 PM	2:35 AM
Sunday	3:20 PM	3:23 AM
Monday	4:01 PM	4:12 AM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOV. 21, 2012

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA5070	4:35am	5:25am	2, 4, 6, 7
UA5062	4:40am	5:30am	1, 3, 5
UA5068	8:25am	9:15am	Daily
UA5074	11:10am	12:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA5076	3:10pm	4:00pm	Daily
UA5078	6:55pm	7:45pm	Daily
UA5072	9:45pm	10:35pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
DL297	4:25pm	7:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-PUSAN (BUS)

0Z608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 6, 7
0Z608	3:30am	6:40am	3

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

0Z606	2:10am	6:00am	1
0Z606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
0Z604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU7108	2:50am	5:55am	1, 3, 5

SAIPAN-GUANZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-VLADIVOSTOK (VVO)

VLK1734	2:00am	8:15am	5 every other week

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

0Z606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1
0Z606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5070/191	4:35am	9:55am	3, 6 via GUM
DL287/173	6:00am	10:20pm	Daily via NRT
UA5076/183	3:10pm	9:25pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5076/183	3:10pm	9:45pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
0Z604/703	3:20pm	11:00pm	Daily via ICN
UA5072/PR111	9:55pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

0Z606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
0Z606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5076/147	3:10pm	10:30pm	1, 5 via GUM
0Z604/749	3:20pm	11:20pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA 5069	2:45am	3:35am	2, 4, 6, 7
UA5071	7:05am	7:55am	Daily
UA5073	9:50am	10:40am	Daily
UA5075	1:45pm	2:35pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA5077	5:35pm	6:25pm	Daily
UA5079	8:20pm	9:10pm	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily

PUSAN (BUS)-SAIPAN

0Z607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 5, 6
0Z607	9:35pm	2:25am+1	2

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

0Z603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
0Z605	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
0Z605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU7107	6:30pm	1:50am+1	2, 4, 7

GUANZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

VLADIVOSTOK (VVO)-SAIPAN

VLK1733	8:00pm	12:05am+1	4 every other week

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

0Z704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
DL172/288	8:00am	1:15am+1	Daily via NRT
UA190/5077	10:55am	6:25pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/5079	10:55am	9:10pm	3, 6 via GUM
UA702/605	12:10pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
0Z702/605	12:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA5071	10:10pm	8:00am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:55pm	7:55am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5071	11:59pm	7:55am+1	2, 5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

0Z746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
0Z724/605	1:50pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
0Z724/605	1:50pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5073	11:25pm	10:40am+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam–Rota			
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily
Rota–Saipan			
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily
Guam–Rota			
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily
Rota–Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily
Rota–Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily
Saipan–Rota			
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily
Rota–Guam			
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily
Saipan–Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily
FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Tinian–Saipan			
FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

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The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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Kilili promises aid to help keep Manglona at Aging Center

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) assured the congregates at the Aging Center that he will look after their interests and help them keep their program coordinator.

Sablan made his promise to the island's elderly about retaining Walter Manglona when he presented his donation of individual fruit baskets Tuesday morning in the spirit of Thanksgiving.

Sablan also was instrumental in getting a reporter inside the center where, until Tuesday, media were not allowed access to the facility due to recent policy changes made by the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs.

Saipan Tribune learned that Aging director Rose Mondala did not allow *Marianas Variety* reporter Junhan Todeno to enter the facility when the latter arrived before 10am in time for Sablan's donation.

Todeno was informed that the Aging program coordinator will be the one to take photos and prepare a media release regarding Sablan's donation. Sources said that Todeno was only allowed to come in after Sablan intervened.

"This is a public facility. If they didn't let the media in, I would not come here," Sablan told the *man'amko.*

Saipan Seniors Advisory Council president Maria Salinas expressed appreciation for Sablan's donation, adding that Sablan does not fail to remember the congregates during the holidays.

Salinas said that Sablan also disclosed that he has been discussing Manglona's situation with a lawyer.

According to Salinas, Sablan advised them not to worry as he is aware of all the hard work that Manglona has put in job as program coordinator and that the delegate will protect the *man'amko*.

"We really hope that he will do something to help us keep our coordinator who has done so much for us here at the center," she said.

Salinas emphasized, however, that she and Mondala get along even after Manglona's non-renewal became an issue.

Salinas said Mondala recognizes what Manglona has done for the *man'amko* "but her hands are tied."

The council president expressed hope that the matter will be resolved soon so that the center can proceed with their upcoming programs and events for the holidays.

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Saipan Seniors Advisory Council president Maria Salinas checks out the individual fruit baskets that Delegate Gregorio Kilili Sablan donated Tuesday morning.

Rotary donates Christmas CDs for 5th Operation Homefront Support

CLARISSA V. DAVID

Rotary officials present to the American Red Cross-NMI Chapter 600 copies of the "Christmas in the Marianas" album for the CNMI Operation Homefront Support during a brief ceremony at the Aging Center yesterday morning. From left to right, Rotarian Kim Forrester, Red Cross executive director John Hirsh, Rotary president Pete Shilling, Community Services director Curtis Dancoe, and vice president Laila Boyer.

By CLARISSA V. DAVID
clarissa_david@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Rotary Club of Saipan donated "Christmas in the Marianas" albums to this year's CNMI Operation Homefront Support.

Rotary president Pete Shilling, vice president Laila Boyer, Community Services director Curtis Dancoe, and Rotarian Kim Forrester presented 250 copies of the album to American Red Cross-NMI Chapter executive director John Hirsh and Health & Safety manager Kennedy Benjamin Tuesday at the Aging Center in Garapan.

Now on its fifth year, the CNMI Operation Homefront Support sends care packages to U.S. Armed Forces service men and women from the Northern Marianas who are currently deployed abroad.

The Christmas album featuring original and cover songs interpreted by 15 artists from the CNMI and Guam will be in addition to popular island items such as ramen, dried mangoes, and Spam which would be included in each care package.

Additionally, program organizers recently received 1,200 boxes of assorted cookies from Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan and more donations are expected to come in from public high schools that have Red Cross clubs, and Noriyasu Horiguchi who will donate coconut chips.

More than 230 soldiers from the Northern Marianas would be receiving the care packages, which would be put together by a group of volunteers at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center this Saturday.

This is by far the largest number of beneficiaries for the program, according to Red Cross officials and it could still go as many as 260 in the coming days since the deadline to submit names and addresses of soldiers has been set on Nov. 23, after Thanksgiving.

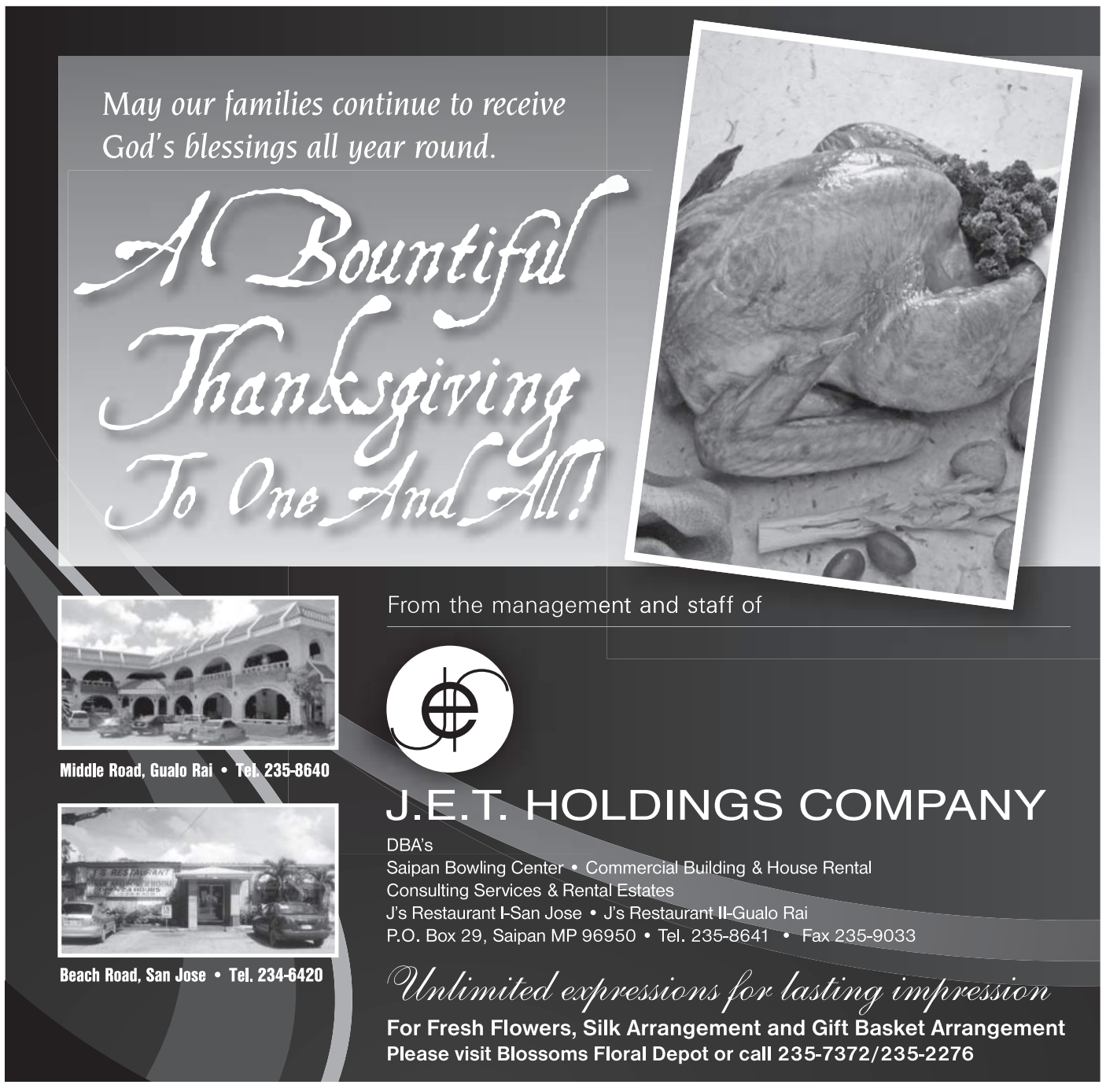
Red Cross executive director Hirsh thanked the Rotary Club of Saipan for supporting this year's CNMI Operation Homefront Support.

"The military means a lot to people here. There's a huge percentage of our population not just on Saipan but also Rota and Tinian that serve in the U.S. military. They've gotten these packages before and they know how wonderful it is to get a care package, especially around the holidays," he said.

Rotary's Shilling, who served in the Air Force for four years and was stationed in Turkey, said he knows from experience what it's like to be based overseas and far away from loved ones during the holidays.

"When you're not around family, you feel alone," he said. "So getting something from home at an important time like Thanksgiving or Christmas just means a great deal for our soldiers out there."

To submit names and addresses of soldiers or to donate items for the care packages, email operationhomefront@pticom.com or call 28-SHARE (74273).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EDUCATION DAY ON TINIAN

Education chief to students: 'You are our bosses'

TINIAN—The impressive and increasing academic performance of public school students say much of how they spend most of their school year.

Their achievements also speak of how parents played key roles in classroom learning, complementing teachers and, as a whole, the Public School System's direction for growth in student learning.

The Public School System throughout the years has grown into a "community of learners," education leaders, policymakers and parents themselves acknowledged. For them, the way student learn has "become a way of life."

On Tuesday, students, teachers, and staff briefly put aside their classroom and schoolwork to celebrate Education Day here on Tinian. For the nearly 700 students, school personnel, and PSS and Board of Education leaders, Tuesday's special ceremony celebrated education and the contributions of students, teachers and staff, and parents in public education.

"Thank you everyone for all that you do to make public education the best institution of learning [that we have in the Commonwealth]. Your collective effort has helped the growth in learning that our children enjoy today," Board of Education Tinian member Lucia Blanco-Maratita told the huge crowd gathered at the sprawling grounds of TJSHS.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tinian Elementary School and Tinian Junior Senior High School Education Day 2012 Awardees are joined by Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan, left, Board of Education Tinian member Lucia Blanco-Maratita, fourth right, and the Public School System leadership team of the island's Education Day Celebration held Tuesday at the grounds of TJSHS.

Education Commissioner Rita A. Sablan flew in yesterday with her leadership team to join the simple yet fun-filled celebration that was jointly put together by the students and school personnel of TJSHS and Tinian Elementary School.

It was a remarkable event that the education chief herself noted how the school district's work to continuously improve classroom learning and teaching have been guided by the desire and willingness of students to learn.

"You are our bosses. We answer to all of you," Sablan said, adding, "We at PSS and the State Board always put student learning our priority. It is about education—and why it matters most to our children."

Sablan also took the occasion to hail the significant learning growth through the many improvements and innovations that made its way into classrooms over the years.

"Your BOE member from Tinian [Lucia Blanco-Maratita] has continuously advocated for equity; the equitable distribution of learning opportunities and resources. And I am proud to say that we have come a long way in ensuring that all of you are given the best opportunities while in school," the education chief told students.

Awardees

Blanco-Maratita, Education Sablan, PSS' leadership team and principals Eric San Nicolas and Dionne Santos led the presentation of special recognition and citations to a handful of school personnel whose contributions this past year impacted student learning.

For TJSHS, Regina C. Palacios was named Teacher of the Year; Janice C. Cruz was named Teacher Aide of the Year; 1st Sgt. Joe T. King was hailed as Instructor of the Year. Maggie Rit A. Patio is Support Staff of the Year and Mario Alo is Maintenance of the Year.

Jennifer San Nicolas, who was named Teacher of the Year, led Tinian Elementary School honorees.

She is joined by Terry Sanchez Lazaro as Teacher Aide of the Year; Carmen Farrell as Support Staff of the Year (Administrative Service) along with Julita Diaz for Trades and Maintenance and Victor Linan for Pupil Transportation.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Senior students of TJSHS perform a special dance number in celebration of Education Day.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Teachers and staff of Tinian Jr. Sr. High School and Tinian Elementary School surprise students and staff with their own interpretation of global dance sensation Gangnam Style.

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Business

Hostess says talks to stave off shutdown fail

NEW YORK (AP)—Hostess Brands Inc. lived to die another day.

The maker of Twinkies and Ding Dongs said late Tuesday that it failed to reach an agreement with its second-biggest union. As a result, Hostess plans to continue with a hearing on Wednesday in which a bankruptcy court judge in White Plains, N.Y., will decide if the company can shutter its operations.

The renewed talks between Hostess and The Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union came after the company declared last week that it would move to wind down its business and start selling off its assets in bankruptcy court. The company cited a crippling strike that was started on Nov. 9 by the union, which represents 30 percent of Hostess workers.

After making its case to liquidate on Monday, the bankruptcy court judge noted that the two sides hadn't yet tried resolving their differences through private mediation. The judge noted that 18,000 jobs were on the line and urged the company and union to try to resolve their differences. Both sides agreed to hold mediation proceedings on Tuesday.

In a statement late Tuesday, Hostess said it would not comment on the breakdown in talks other than to say that mediation "was unsuccessful." A lawyer for the bakers union said he had no comment, citing mediation ground rules.

Hostess shut down its three dozen plants late last week after it said the strike by the bakers union hurt its ability to maintain normal production.

AP

Curtis Smout stands in line with a stack of Twinkies at the Hostess Thrift Shop in Ogden, Utah on Friday, Nov. 16, 2012.

The union says the company's demise was the result of years of mismanagement, however, and that workers have already given steep concessions over the years.

Hostess, weighed down by management turmoil, rising labor costs and Americans' changing tastes, is making its second trip through Chapter 11 bankruptcy restructuring. The company, based in Irving, Texas, had brought on CEO Gregory Rayburn as a restructuring expert in part to renegotiate its contract with labor unions.

The company reached an agreement with its biggest union, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, on a contract that dramatically reduced pension contributions, as well as slashing wages and health benefits. But the company said the bakers union stopped returning its calls about a month ago.

The Teamsters urged the smaller union to hold a secret ballot on whether members wanted to continue striking. Many workers in the bakers union decided to cross picket lines last week but Hostess said it wasn't enough to keep operations at normal levels.

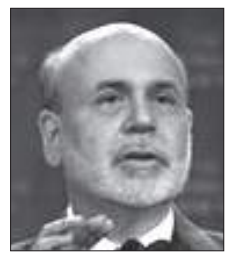
Teamsters General Secretary Ken Hall said the failure of the mediation talks Tuesday and the likely shuttering of the company was a "tragic outcome" for Hostess workers.

Rayburn said that Hostess was already operating on razor thin margins and that the strike was the final blow. The bakers union meanwhile pointed to the steep raises executives were given last year as the company was spiraling down toward bankruptcy.

Bernanke warns Congress to avoid Jan. 'fiscal cliff'

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke on Tuesday urged Congress and the Obama administration to strike a budget deal to avert tax increases and spending cuts that could trigger a recession next year.

Without a deal, the measures known as the "fiscal cliff" will take effect in January.



Bernanke

Bernanke also said Congress must raise the federal debt limit to prevent the government from defaulting on Treasurys debt. Failure to do so would impose heavy costs on the economy, he said. Bernanke said Congress also needs to reduce the federal debt over the long run to ensure economic growth and stability.

Uncertainty about all these issues is likely holding back spending and investment and troubling investors, the Fed chairman said in a speech to the Economic Club of New York.

Resolving the fiscal crisis would prevent a sudden and severe shock to the economy, help reduce unemployment and strengthen growth, he said. That could make the new year "a very good one for the American economy," he said.

"A stronger economy will, in turn, reduce the deficit and contribute to achieving long-term fiscal sustainability," Bernanke told the group.

When asked during a question and answer session after the speech whether the Fed could soften the impact of the fiscal cliff, Bernanke was firm in his warning.

"In the worst-case scenario where the economy goes off the broad fiscal cliff ... I don't think the Fed has the tools to offset that," Bernanke said.

Bernanke also said the severity of the Great Recession may have reduced the U.S. economy's potential growth rate. He didn't say by how much or how long slower-than-normal growth might persist. Over the long run, the U.S. economy has grown an average of about 2.5 percent each year. Economists predict growth in the July-September quarter will be revised up to an annual rate of around 3 percent, above the government's initial 2 percent estimate.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Ex-hedge fund trader charged in $276M insider ploy

NEW YORK (AP)—A former hedge fund portfolio manager was arrested Tuesday in what prosecutors called perhaps the most lucrative insider trading scheme of all time—an arrangement to obtain secret, advance results of tests on an experimental Alzheimer's drug that netted more than $276 million for his fund and others. The case also led authorities to investigate the activities of one of the nation's wealthiest hedge fund managers, billionaire Steven A. Cohen. The portfolio manager, Mathew Martoma, was accused in U.S. District Court in Manhattan of using the information to advise other investment professionals to buy shares in the companies developing the drug, then later to dump those investments and place financial bets against the companies when the tests returned disappointing results.

HP claims fraud prompted $5B overpayment for co.

NEW YORK (AP)—Hewlett-Packard Co. said on Tuesday that it's the victim of a multi-billion dollar fraud at the hands of a British company it bought last year that lied about its finances. HP CEO Meg Whitman said executives at Autonomy Corporation PLC "willfully" boosted the company's figures through various accounting tricks, which convinced HP to pay $9.7 billion for the company in October 2011. Autonomy's former CEO said HP's allegations are false. HP is now taking an $8.8 billion charge to align Autonomy's purchase price with what HP now says is its real value. More than $5 billion of that charge is due to false accounting, HP said.

Nation

Rubble cleanup a massive task in NY, NJ

NEW YORK (AP)—Just a few months ago, the parking lot at Jacob Riis Park on New York City's Rockaway seashore was filled with happy beachgoers. Now, it is home to a mountain of misery from Superstorm Sandy—a growing pile of garbage containing everything from mangled appliances, splintered plywood and sodden drywall to shreds of clothing and family photos.

The seagull-pecked pile, at least two stories high, three quarters of a mile long, and fed by an endless caravan of dump trucks, is just part of a staggering round-the-clock operation along hundreds of miles of coastline to clear away the mangled mess of homes, cars and boats so the rebuilding can begin.

Three weeks in, it is an effort that has strained the resources of sanitation departments and landfill operators, and caused headaches and heartache for thousands of families in the sprawling disaster zone.

The lucky have only had to empty their basements of soggy belongings. Others have been forced to strip their flood-ravaged homes down to the studs and pile drywall, furniture, clothing and appliances on the sidewalk.

"We've seen people put virtually all their worldly possessions at the curb," said Mike Deery, a spokesman for the town of Hempstead, which includes several beach and bay hamlets on Long Island's South Shore. "We've gone down streets and picked up the entire contents of homes, and come back the next day and have it look like we haven't been there in months."

In the three weeks since the storm, New York City alone has removed an estimated 271,000 tons of wreckage from flooded neighborhoods. That doesn't include the downed limbs and trunks of some 26,000 damaged trees.

New Jersey shore towns have been adding to big piles of rubble just like the one at Jacob Riis. One of the biggest ones, in Long Branch, reaches nearly three stories into the sky from a vacant lot a block from the ocean.

As of Friday, auto insurance companies had reported storm damage to at least 52,000 vehicles, according to the National Insurance Crime Bureau. Many of those cars floated on the tide and were left smashed, silt-filled and strewn across sidewalks and yards.

In Long Beach, N.Y., a barrier island city of 33,000 people that was completely inundated by the storm surge, public works crews worked 16-hour shifts to scoop up hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of sand that had buried city streets. The mountain of silt they have created now stands five stories high.

A powerful mechanism has been at work to make it happen: In New York, the city's regular army of 6,000 sanitation workers has been supplemented by battalions of private contractors, hired under a $92 million FEMA contract administered by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Garbage barge terminals on Staten Island that were last used to remove debris from the World Trade Center after 9/11 have been pressed into service again, this time carrying Sandy's wreckage up the Hudson River, toward a landfill outside Seneca Falls.

AP

A U.S. flag is draped amidst rubble left by a fire during Superstorm Sandy, Tuesday, Nov. 20, 2012, at Breezy Point in the Queens borough of New York.

Panetta says war on al-Qaida taking new direction

WASHINGTON (AP)—America's war on al-Qaida is taking a new direction, moving beyond declared combat zones like Afghanistan while countering the terrorist network's search for new sanctuaries, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said Tuesday.

Panetta said the evolving campaign will feature the use of small U.S. strike forces; more partnering with foreign commandos; and more training and other forms of assistance that enable partner nations to combat terrorism on their own.

It also will require that the U.S. and its NATO allies "finish the job right" in Afghanistan, he said, noting that al-Qaida and other extremist groups view the country's rugged northeast—along the Pakistan border—as a viable haven. The U.S. combat mission in Afghanistan is due to end in December 2014, but Panetta said the U.S. intends to have an enduring presence there.

Panetta

"All this sends a very simple and very powerful message to al-Qaida, to the Taliban, and to the violent extremist groups who want to regain a safe haven in Afghanistan: We are not going anywhere; our commitment to Afghanistan is long term, and you cannot wait us out," Panetta said in a speech to the Center for a New American Security, a think tank.

But as the war there winds down, al-Qaida is adjusting to the setbacks it has suffered not only in Afghanistan and Pakistan but also in Yemen and Somalia, he said.

"The al-Qaida cancer has also adapted to this pressure by becoming even more widely distributed, loosely knit and geographically dispersed," Panetta said.

"After being left on the sidelines of the momentous change that swept through the Arab world last year, they are now seeking to take advantage of the transition period to gain new sanctuary, to incite violence and to sow instability," he added.

Army veteran drove float in Texas parade crash

MIDLAND, Texas (AP)—The driver of a parade float filled with wounded veterans and their spouses that was struck by a freight train in West Texas is an Army veteran himself who is "in shock" over the accident that killed four people, an attorney said Tuesday.

Dale Andrew Hayden was driving a flatbed truck that investigators say edged across a railroad crossing despite warning signals of a fast approaching train, Hayden's attorney, Hal Brockett said.

"Words can't express the sorrow and remorse for the people who got hurt and killed," Brockett said in an interview.

The revelation of who the driver was came as the National Transportation Safety Board conducted a sight distance test at the crash site. A train and a truck similar to those involved in the accident were driven across the site at various intervals, and the railroad crossing was activated.

Four veterans were killed in the collision in Midland on Thursday. Sixteen people were injured.

Investigators say the float began crossing the train tracks even though warning bells were sounding and the crossing lights were flashing. A Union Pacific train travelling at more than 60 mph ran into the truck as the occupants scrambled to jump to safety.

Hayden, who has a military career spanning more than three decades, now works as a truck driver for Smith Industries, an oilfield services company. Brockett said the company placed Hayden on medical leave.

Hayden is "kind of catatonic" and not ready to be interviewed, Brockett said. "He's just very much in shock."

Doug Fletcher, a Dallas attorney representing Smith Industries, said Hayden is an Army reservist who has been driving for the company for two years and may have driven in the parade before.

Hayden is undergoing "professional counseling," Fletcher said. "He is beyond distraught."

Fletcher said the company is taking steps to protect the driver after he received "some hate emails."

No one responded to a knock on the door at a mobile home listed as Hayden's residence Tuesday.

ACROSS THE NATION

Boy charged in fatal shooting on Florida bus

MIAMI (AP)—A South Florida teen was charged with fatally shooting a girl in front of her younger sister and several other students while riding the bus to school Tuesday morning, Miami-Dade police said. The 15-year-old male student was taken into custody at the scene in Homestead and later charged with manslaughter and carrying a concealed firearm. The Associated Press does not identify juvenile offenders. An arrest report says the minor took a gun from his backpack and began displaying it on the bus. He then fired it once, hitting Lourdes Guzman. The 13-year-old girl was airlifted to a Miami hospital, where she died. Eight other children, including Guzman's 7-year-old sister, were on the bus but were not harmed. Authorities took the children and the bus driver to a police station to be interviewed.

Suspect's family has questions in monkey killing

BOISE, Idaho (AP)—A 22-year-old man who police say killed a monkey after breaking into the Boise zoo has encountered run-ins with the law in the last three years that include a pair of drug arrests and a conviction for driving drunk. A day after Michael J. Watkins' arrest, authorities attempted to answer what may have prompted the once-promising wrestler from western Idaho to enter the facility early Saturday and what he planned to do with the animal, officials said. Members of the community and Watkins' family also were trying to determine what could have led to the attack and why someone would do such a thing. His mother, Susan Watkins, said in a brief interview Tuesday from her home in McCall that as much as the public is perplexed by what happened, "I am too. That's all I can say."

US, Mexico sign rules on sharing Colorado River

CORONADO, Calif. (AP)—The United States and Mexico on Tuesday signed a pact for new rules on sharing water from the Colorado River, capping a five-year effort on how to spread the pain of drought and reap the benefits of wet years. The far-reaching agreement gives Mexico badly needed water storage capacity in Lake Mead, which stretches across Nevada and Arizona. Mexico will forfeit some of its share of the river during shortages, bringing itself in line with western U.S. states that already have agreed how much they will surrender when waters recede. Mexico also will capture some surpluses when waters rise. Also under the plan, water agencies in California, Arizona and Nevada will buy water from Mexico, which will use some of the money to upgrade its canals and other infrastructure.

Asia

Courting Asia, Obama finds that the world still intrudes

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP)—For all the attention wrenched elsewhere in recent days—on new violence in the Middle East, the "fiscal cliff" back home—President Barack Obama's speedy trip to Southeast Asia achieved a major goal: It was clearly seen in the region as a validation of Asia's strategic importance as the U.S. refocuses its foreign policy to counter China's clout.

Obama

It wasn't easy. Even in a Buddhist monastery in Thailand, Obama could not escape the budget woes waiting for him back home. And his historic visit to Myanmar was all but drowned out by the rocket fire and missile strikes between Israel and Gaza. He went half a world away to promote U.S.-style democracy but couldn't leave his troubles behind.

Even as Obama traipsed in stocking feet through a temple in the heart of Bangkok, a monk wished him luck negotiating the deficit-reduction challenge awaiting him in Washington. And the bloodshed in the Middle East, exploding as he toured Southeast Asia for three days, illustrated the limits of U.S. foreign policy even as he tried to display its influence and reach.

But he came away from his trip to this corner of the world—a place once defined by a cloistered and shunned nation like Myanmar or by Khmer Rouge "killing fields" or by Chinese power -with at least the hope that the example of U.S. democracy can effect change and strengthen America's hand.

He made his case clearly during a Bangkok news conference:

"It's worked for us for over 200 years now, and I think it's going to work for Thailand and it's going to work for this entire region," he said. "And the alternative, I think, is a false hope that, over time, I think erodes and collapses under the weight of people whose aspirations are not being met."

Establishing a bigger, more influential presence in the Asia-Pacific region has long been an Obama objective, a goal driven by 21st century geopolitical considerations and by the Hawaiian-born president's own self-identity as the first Pacific president.

Just by making the trip—and by making it his first after his re-election—Obama made a point about the importance the U.S. attaches to the region.

He was greeted by large crowds chanting his name in Thailand and in Myanmar, a country less than two years removed from a repressive military dictatorship where such assemblies were long forbidden. The English-language Myanmar Times newspaper heralded the arrival of "O-Burma" on its front page, while Thai newspapers praised his apparent interest in the native brand of Buddhism following his monastery visit.

The reception was more muted in neighboring Cambodia, a staunch ally of China that pointedly displayed a sign at the presidential palace welcoming Chinese premier Wen Jiabao but nothing for Obama. Still, there was a message for Asia in Obama's mere presence. The president was attending an annual summit of Southeast Asian leaders in Phnom Penh, yet another indication of U.S. intentions to pay a bigger role in the region.

Afghan revolving door: 5 US generals, 5 years

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)—For former CIA director David Petraeus, it was a one-year stint as top U.S. commander in Afghanistan. His replacement is scheduled to leave next year after 18 months in the job.

And now the sex scandal that draws them together—Petraeus' career toppled and Marine Gen. John Allen's possibly on hold—also has placed greater attention to the quick turnover of American battlefield chiefs in the 11-year war.

Nearly two dozen generals have commanded troops from the United States and the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force, or ISAF, since the American invasion in late 2001—with five U.S. generals running both commands in the past five years alone.

There is no firm evidence the Pentagon's revolving door in Afghanistan has posed any significant obstacles for U.S. troops, but some military analysts suggest the frequent changes at the top create potential breaks in continuity in the critical cooperation with the Afghan political leadership and security officials.

"The learning curve is pretty steep," said retired Lt. Gen. David Barno, who commanded U.S. forces in Afghanistan in 2003 and 2004. "One of the critical coins of the realm in being effective in this kind of environment is relationships among your allies, relationships with the host nation, and with the Afghans."

Iraq also had regular command changes, including Petraeus in charge during the U.S. troop "surge" in 2007 that helped dislodge insurgent control from key areas. But the war strategy in Afghanistan has, at many times, been even more complex as fronts shift and Taliban fighters regain strength.

ASIA BRIEFS

India hangs gunman from 2008 Mumbai attack

MUMBAI, India (AP)—India executed the lone surviving gunman from the 2008 terror attack on Mumbai early Wednesday, the country's home ministry said. Mohammed Ajmal Kasab, a Pakistani citizen, was one of 10 gunmen who rampaged through the streets of India's financial capital for three days in November 2008, killing 166 people. Kasab was hung in secrecy at 7:30 a.m. Wednesday at a jail in Pune, a city near Mumbai, after Indian President Pranab Mukherjee rejected his plea for mercy. Union Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde said the home ministry sent Kasab's mercy plea to Mukherjee on October 16. Mukherjee rejected it on November 5, he said. "It was decided then that on 21st November at 7:30 in the morning he would be hanged. That procedure has been completed today," Shinde said.

Ex-Marcos aide charged in NY with art conspiracy

NEW YORK (AP)—A former secretary to Imelda Marcos was charged Tuesday in New York with conspiracy to sell valuable artworks that disappeared during the collapse of Marcos' husband's regime in the Philippines. Vilma Bautista, 74, was indicted on charges of conspiracy, tax fraud and offering a false instrument for filing. Two of her nephews, Chaiyot Jansen Navalaksana and Pongsak Navalaksana, also were charged. Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr. said Bautista used false paperwork to sell a work from Claude Monet's "Water Lilies" series for $32 million in September 2010. "The integrity of the international art market must be protected," Vance said in a statement. "This indictment sheds light on what happened to major works of art missing for more than 25 years."

World

Israel-Hamas cease-fire remains elusive

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel and the Hamas militant group edged closer to a cease-fire Tuesday to end a weeklong Israeli offensive in the Gaza Strip, but after a day of furious diplomatic efforts involving the U.S. secretary of state, U.N. chief and Egypt's president, a deal remained elusive and fighting raged on both sides of the border.

Israeli tanks and gunboats pummeled targets in Gaza in what appeared to be a last-minute burst of fire, while at least 200 rockets were fired into Israel. As talks dragged on near midnight, Israeli and Hamas officials, communicating through Egyptian mediators, expressed hope that a deal would soon be reached, but cautioned that it was far from certain.

"If there is a possibility of achieving a long-term solution to this problem by diplomatic means, we prefer that. But if not, then I am sure you will understand that Israel will have to take whatever actions are necessary to defend its people," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said at a late-night meeting with visiting Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Clinton was hastily dispatched to the region by President Barack Obama to join a high-profile group of world leaders working to halt the violence. Standing alongside the Israeli leader, Clinton indicated it could take some time to iron out an agreement.

"In the days ahead, the United States will work with our partners here in Israel and across the region toward an outcome that bolsters security for the people of Israel, improves conditions for the people of Gaza and moves toward a comprehensive peace for all people of the region," she said.

Clinton expressed sorrow for the heavy loss of life on both sides, but called for the Palestinian rocket attacks on Israel to end and stressed that the American commitment to Israel's security is "rock solid."

"The goal must be a durable outcome that promotes regional stability and advances the security and legitimate aspirations of Israelis and Palestinians alike," she said.

Militants' reach

Rockets new to Gaza militants' arsenal allow them to strike targets in Israel that previously were out of reach. Type and range in miles (kilometers):

Rocket type	Range
Heavy mortar	6 (10)
Kassam rocket	11 (18)
Grad rocket	12 (19)
Upgraded Grad	30 (48)
Fajr-5 rocket	47 (76)

Source: Global Security, AP, ESRI
Graphic: Los Angeles Times © 2012 MCT

In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said Clinton met with Netanyahu and other Israeli officials for two hours.

"They discussed efforts to de-escalate the situation and bring about a sustainable outcome that protects Israel's security and improves the lives of civilians in Gaza," Nuland said. "They also consulted on her impending stops in Ramallah and Cairo, including Egyptian efforts to advance de-escalation."

Israel launched the offensive on Nov. 14 in a bid to end months of rocket attacks out of the Hamas-run territory, which lies on Israel's southern flank. After assassinating Hamas' military chief, it has carried out a blistering campaign of airstrikes, targeting rocket launchers, storage sites and wanted militants.

The campaign has killed more than 130 Palestinians, including dozens of civilians, and wounded hundreds of others. Five Israelis have been killed by rocket fire, including a soldier and a civilian contractor on Tuesday.

With Israel massing thousands of ground troops on the Gaza border, diplomats raced throughout the region in search of a formula to halt the fighting.

In a meeting with Netanyahu, U.N. chief Ban Ki-moon condemned Palestinian rocket attacks, but urged Israel to show "maximum restraint."

"Further escalation benefits no one," he said.

Israel demands an end to rocket fire from Gaza and a halt to weapons smuggling into Gaza through tunnels under the border with Egypt. It also wants international guarantees that Hamas will not rearm or use Egypt's Sinai region, which abuts both Gaza and southern Israel, to attack Israelis.

Hamas wants Israel to halt all attacks on Gaza and lift tight restrictions on trade and movement in and out of the territory that have been in place since Hamas seized Gaza by force in 2007. Israel has rejected such demands in the past.

Egypt's new Islamist government is expected to play a key role in maintaining a deal.

The crisis has thrust Egypt's president, Mohammed Morsi, into the spotlight as he plays a difficult balancing act.

Syrian rebels seize base, arms trove

BASE OF THE 46TH REGIMENT, Syria (AP)—After a nearly two-month siege, Syrian rebels overwhelmed a large military base in the north of the country and made off with tanks, armored vehicles and truckloads of munitions that rebel leaders say will give them a boost in the fight against President Bashar Assad's army.

The rebel capture of the base of the Syrian army's 46th Regiment is a sharp blow to the government's efforts to roll back rebels gains and shows a rising level of organization among opposition forces.

More important than the base's fall, however, are the weapons the rebels found inside.

At a rebel base where the much of the haul was taken after the weekend victory, rebel fighters unloaded half a dozen large trucks piled high with green boxes full of mortars, artillery shells, rockets and rifles taken from the base. Parked nearby were five tanks, two armored vehicles, two rocket launchers and two heavy-caliber artillery cannons.

Around 20 Syrian soldiers captured in the battle were put to work carrying munitions boxes, barefoot and stripped to the waist. Rebels refused to let reporters talk to them or see where they were being held.

"There has never been a battle before with this much booty," said Gen. Ahmad al-Faj of the rebels Joint Command, a grouping of rebel brigades that was involved in the siege. Speaking on Monday at the rebel base, set up in a former customs office at Syria's Bab al-Hawa border crossing with Turkey, he said the haul would be distributed among the brigades.

For months, Syria's rebels have gradually been destroying government checkpoints and taking over towns in the northern provinces of Idlib and Aleppo along the Turkish border.

Rebel fighters say that weapons seized in such battles have been essential to their transformation from ragtag brigades into forces capable of challenging Assad's professional army. Cross-border arms smuggling from Turkey and Iraq has also played a role, although the most common complaint among rebel fighters is that they lack ammunition and heavy weapons, munitions and anti-aircraft weapons to fight Assad's air force.

Environment

Local birders to take part in Christmas Bird Count

For more than 13 years, Saipan has been a part of the Audubon Society's Christmas Bird Count, a long running winter tradition.

Each year from approximately mid-December through the first week in January, birders and volunteers across the western hemisphere participate in this daylong event. As a result, the 2011 count shattered all previous records. A total of 2,248 individual counts and 63,223 people tallied over 60 million birds. Counts took place in all 50 states and all Canadian provinces, and 99 CBC count circles were tallied in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific Islands.

The volunteer-generated data that are a result of this event have become an important part of the U.S. Government's Natural History Monitoring Database. The CBC is a great opportunity for bird enthusiasts of all ages and skill levels to make a significant and useful contribution to science.

So come take part in this fun, daylong event! Simply meet us by 6am on Dec. 18 at the American Memorial Park parking lot with water, snacks or food, paper, pencils or pens, and binoculars and field guide if you have them (it's OK if you don't own either—come anyway). As you'll take part in both roadside and walking surveys, please come appropriately attired. And, good news this year; a $5 participation fee is no longer required. As a result, the annual Christmas Bird Count publication, *American Birds*, will now be published online.

Paul Radley of the CNMI Division of Fish and Wildlife will be leading and organizing the count. If you have any questions or are interested in taking part in the counts on Tinian (Dec. 16, 2012) or Rota (yet to be determined), call or e-mail Paul at 664-6011 or paulradleycnmidfw@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

DEQ DONATION CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Thanksgiving, after all, is a word of action. This season, the Division of Environmental took a moment to gather a modest donation for Karidat's food drive. In the photo, from left, are Reina Camacho (DEQ), Jacob Lizama, Julie (Karidat), and Calvani (Karidat).

Spotlight on ocean resources at CRGA 42

NOUMEA, New Caledonia—"With water covering some 98.5 per cent of the region"s total area, it is not surprising that many countries and territories regard marine resources as the key to their future development," said Dr. Jimmie Rodgers, Director-General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

"But benefitting from ocean resources is a complex challenge involving technical issues, including international law, a wide range of stakeholders and often competing priorities. In fact, we know much less about the ocean than the land."

The annual meeting of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community's governing body, which was held last week at its headquarters in Noumea, looked at some of these key challenges and proposed solutions for responsible use and conservation of our ocean.

Specific areas that SPC works on include oceanic fisheries science, coastal fisheries management, maritime boundaries, deep-sea minerals, coastal erosion and deposition, shipping services for small island states, safety at sea and marine pollution.

The year 2012 has seen unprecedented interest in oceans at both global and regional levels. The theme of the 43rd Pacific Islands Forum, "Large Ocean Island States: The Pacific Challenge" focused attention on what is the region's greatest natural asset. The Rio+20 process, the launch of the World Bank's Global Partnership for Oceans and our very own Pacific Oceanscape initiative are examples of commitments that acknowledge the value of our oceans.

The 42nd Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations, the annual meeting of SPC's governing body, met until until Nov. 16 , 2012. It brought together government representatives from SPC"s 26 member countries, and observers from regional and international agencies. ***(SPC)***

SPC

An SPC staff (in purple) conducts sub-regional training on biological sampling of fish species in Fiji.

A. Samoa protects sharks, plus 3 species of large coral reef fish

The Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources has promulgated new regulations protecting these rare marine species, which took effect on Nov. 11, 2012. American Samoa has acted to protect all sharks plus three species of large coral reef fish in all the waters of its territory. It is now illegal to catch or even possess humphead wrasse, bumphead parrotfish, giant grouper, or any species of shark anywhere in the territory or territorial waters.

Territorial waters extend 3 nautical miles from the shoreline. All sizes and ages and any parts are fully protected, at all times, everywhere in the territory. These regulations are the most powerful protection for sharks in the United States, and provide the only protection for the other three reef fish within the U.S., except for where all fish are protected.

Because possession of all parts of these species is illegal, shark fins are illegal in the territory, including transshipping sharks or fins. Because none of these fish can be brought into the territory, the protection of this regulation may extend to nearby waters where fishers would bring their catch into the territory. These fish were protected first with an executive order of the governor, and then additionally by these newly adopted fishing regulations by the Department of Marine & Wildlife Resources.

A recent scientific paper published by NOAA's CRED division in Hawaii estimated that the territory has just 4-8 percent of the sharks it would have if there were no people (Nadon et al. 2012). Reef sharks are slow growing, late maturing, and produce very few pups each year, and thus cannot sustain anything but the lightest fishing pressure. The primary reason for the low number of sharks is fishing, though other effects of human activities, like sediment, nutrient and chemical runoff may contribute by damaging fish habitat, and the number of fish is also affected by the amount of juvenile habitat. American Samoa's Marine Protected Areas are too small to protect sharks, they swim over large areas and will swim outside the MPAs and can be caught.

There used to be a few schools of bumphead parrotfish here, but now only about one fish per year is sighted, and they appear to be close to local extinction. Spear fishing using lights at night is especially effective at taking these parrotfish, because they sleep together at the bottom in a school in the same place every night. Bumpheads have been driven to local extinction on some islands in Fiji. Humphead wrasse are less common here than many places where there are no people. Giant groupers and some kinds of sharks appear to be naturally rare here and elsewhere. If the last ones are caught, they could become locally extinct.

All these fish are large, reaching 4 feet or more in length and 100-600 pounds, depending on the species. Fishing usually removes the largest fish first. There is direct evidence from a NOAA CRED study that islands in the U.S. Pacific, including American Samoa, which have people have fewer big fish than islands without people, while populated islands have just as many small fish as unpopulated islands (Williams et al. 2011).

The American Samoa government has adopted these new regulations to help fish populations recover to help create a balanced ecosystem which includes sustainable fishing yields and supports traditional cultural practices which are important locally. The largest coral reef fish are overfished on most coral reefs around the world where people are near, making this a widespread problem. ***(PR)***

Life & Style

Elmo actor resigns amid underage-sex allegations

By FRAZIER MOORE
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Elmo puppeteer Kevin Clash resigned from "Sesame Street" on Tuesday amid allegations he sexually abused underage boys, bringing an end to a 28-year career in which he turned the furry red monster into one of the most beloved—and lucrative—characters on TV and in toy stores.

"Personal matters have diverted attention away from the important work 'Sesame Street' is doing and I cannot allow it to go on any longer," the 52-year-old performer said in a statement. "I am deeply sorry to be leaving and am looking forward to resolving these personal matters privately."

His departure came as a 24-year-old college student, Cecil Singleton, sued Clash for more than $5 million Tuesday, accusing the actor of engaging in sexual behavior with him when he was 15. Singleton charged that Clash made a habit of trolling gay chat lines for underage boys and meeting them for sex.

It was the second such allegation in just over a week. On Nov. 12, a man in his 20s said he had sex with Clash at age 16. A day later, though, the young man recanted, saying their relationship was adult and consensual.

Clash was a young puppeteer at "Sesame Street" in the mid-1980s when he was assigned a little-used puppet now known as Elmo and turned him into a star, creating his high-pitched voice and child-like personality. Clash also served as the show's senior Muppet coordinator and Muppet captain, winning 23 daytime Emmy awards and one prime-time Emmy.

AP

Cecil Singleton speaks during a press conference on Tuesday, Nov. 20, 2012 in New York.

In a statement, Sesame Workshop said that "the controversy surrounding Kevin's personal life has become a distraction that none of us want" and that Clash had concluded "he can no longer be effective in his job."

"This is a sad day for Sesame Street," the company said.

Clash did not address the new allegations. He said previously that he had an adult and consensual relationship with the first accuser. The divorced father of a grown daughter, he acknowledged that he is gay.

At a news conference Tuesday, Singleton said he and Clash met on a gay chat line when he was 15, and for a two-week period, they had sexual contact but not intercourse. He said he didn't know what Clash did for a living until he was 19 and Googled his name.

"I was shocked when I found out what he did for a living," said Singleton, a student in criminal psychology who lives in New York but would not say where he goes to school.

He said he didn't consider speaking up until he heard about last week's accusation.

"I thought I was a unique circumstance," Singleton said. "I did not know that it was something he had done habitually."

Singleton's lawyer, Jeff Herman, said he had been contacted by two other potential victims and expects additional legal action. Sex with a person under 17 is a felony in New York if the perpetrator is 21 or older.

Elmo has been a major moneymaker for Sesame Workshop. By one estimate, Elmo toys, such as the giggling Tickle Me Elmo doll, account for one-half to two-thirds of the $75 million in annual sales the Sesame Street toy line generates for Hasbro.

Clash became something of a star himself. In 2006, he published an autobiography, "My Life as a Furry Red Monster," and he was the subject of the 2011 documentary "Being Elmo: A Puppeteer's Journey."

Episodes with Clash performing as Elmo will presumably continue well into 2014. Taping of season No. 44 will wrap by mid-December and will begin airing next September, according to someone close to the show who spoke on condition of anonymity because the person was not authorized to publicly discuss details of its production.

As for who might take over as Elmo, other "Sesame Street" puppeteers have been trained to serve as Clash's stand-in, Sesame Workshop said.

"Elmo is bigger than any one person," the company said last week.

On Tuesday, Hasbro echoed that sentiment with its own statement: "We are confident that Elmo will remain an integral part of Sesame Street and that Sesame Street toys will continue to delight children for years to come."

Documentary: Inmate may be involved in Simpson case

TAMPA, Florida (AP)—A documentary says a Florida death-row inmate might have been involved in the murder of O.J. Simpson's ex-wife and her friend, a claim being criticized by one victim's family and being looked at skeptically by a detective and a prosecutor who dealt with the convict.

The Investigation Discovery show, "My Brother the Serial Killer," will air Wednesday. The film is a look at Glen Rogers, a carnival worker whom Florida jurors convicted in 1997 of killing a woman in a Tampa motel room.

Rogers

Rogers, who is now 50, was also convicted of murder in California and is a suspect in homicides in Mississippi, Louisiana and Kentucky—and possibly several other states.

Most of his victims were women he had met in bars while drifting across the country. All of his victims were stabbed to death. With blazing blue eyes, a scraggly beard and long, blond hair, Rogers was arrested in November 1995, near Waco, Kentucky, after a nationwide manhunt for the so-called "Cross-Country Killer" and a 100 mph (160 mph) chase.

Rogers, who is from Hamilton, Ohio, met Nicole Brown Simpson in 1994 when he was living in Southern California, his family says in the documentary.

A criminal profiler in the film says he received paintings by Rogers with clues possibly linking him to the 1994 murders of Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend, Ronald Goldman. The profiler says that Rogers sent him a painting of the murder weapon used in the slayings.

"I believe that Glen believes he killed them," said Anthony Meoli, an Atlanta criminal profiler who has received more than 1,000 letters from Rogers and has interviewed him in prison.

Simpson was accused in those killings but the so-called "trial of the century" in Los Angeles ended with his acquittal in 1995.

Simpson never testified at the criminal trial, but memorably demonstrated in court that a glove found near the slaying scene did not fit his hand. He testified at length in a wrongful-death trial that led a Los Angeles civil court jury in 1997 to find him liable for damages in the case. Simpson is serving a prison sentence in Nevada after being convicted in 2008 of leading five men, including two with guns, in a September 2007 confrontation with two sports memorabilia dealers and a middleman at a Las Vegas casino-hotel.

Much of the film is narrated by Rogers' brother, Clay Rogers, who used to rob homes with Glen Rogers as a teen but in 1993 called the police on his brother after finding a body at the family's Kentucky cabin.

Clay Rogers said that in 1994, weeks before Nicole Simpson's slaying, Glen Rogers told him he had met her.

"They've got money, they're well off and I'm taking her down," he quotes Glen Rogers as saying.

Other family members also said Glen Rogers talked about meeting Simpson's ex-wife.

In a statement, Goldman's sister criticized the documentary. "I am appalled at the level of irresponsibility demonstrated by the network and the producers of this so-called documentary," Kim Goldman said. "This is the first time we are hearing about this story, and considering that their 'main character,' Glen Rogers, confessed to stabbing my brother and Nicole to death, you would think we would be in the loop."

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Century Tours, Saipan

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Closing Date: **November 23, 2012** Salary: **$5.55 - $6.60 per hour**

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Position Requirements: High School graduate, GED or equivalent plus 2 years work experience in tour operation, sales or service related experience; must be able to speak, read, and understand Mandarin; excellent communication, organizational, and sales skills preferred; must be willing to work evenings, holidays, and weekends.

Application: Applications may be obtained from the Front Office of Century Tours, located at the Kanoa Resort on Beach Road, Susupe, Saipan.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairwoman of the Board, is hereby giving notice that the Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled on **Tuesday, November 27, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. at the NMHC Conference Room, Garapan, Saipan**. The public is welcome to submit written or oral comments regarding the agenda below. Individuals interested in attending the meeting and needing special accommodations are requested to contact NMHC in advance.

I. PRELIMARY MATTERS
a. Call to Order
b. Roll Call
c. Adoption of Agenda
d. Adoption of Minutes
i. Thursday, October 25, 2012 – Regular Board Meeting Minutes

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

III. CORPORATE DIRECTOR'S REPORT
a. LIHTC Programs
i. Isa Villas, LLC
ii. Blue Water Homes, LLC
b. Tenant-Based Voucher – Project Based Voucher Conversion
c. HOME Loans for Review and Approval
d. Marianas Medical Referral Center

IV. FIELD OFFICE REPORTS
a. Rota Field Office
b. Tinian Field Office

V. FISCAL AFFAIRS
a. Unaudited Financial Statements as of September 30, 2012

VI. LEGAL COUNSEL'S PENDING/ONGOING REPORT

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

VIII. OTHER MATTERS

IX. ADJOURNMENT

(Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a) (7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session.)

MARCIE M. TOMOKANE
Chairwoman of the Board

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Rise of the Guardians 3D
Thursday 1:30 7:30
Cast: Chris Pine, Hugh Jackman, Alec Baldwin
Genre: Children's/family • Rated PG

Synopsis
A group of mythical fairy-tale characters team up to save the world in this DreamWorks Animation production. Based on William Joyce's series of children's books, the pic features the voice acting talents of Chris Pine, Hugh Jackman, Alec Baldwin, Jude Law, and Isla Fisher. Peter Ramsey co-directs with Joyce.

Life of Pi 3D
Thursday 1:05 7:05 9:50
Cast: Suraj Sharma, Irfan Khan, Tabu, Rafe Spall
Genre: Drama, Adventure • Rated PG

Red Dawn
Thursday 1:25 4:25 7:25 9:35
Chris Hemsworth, Josh Peck, Josh Hutcherson
Genre: Action • Rated PG13

Life of Pi 2D
Thursday 4:05
Cast: Suraj Sharma, Irfan Khan, Tabu, Rafe Spall
Genre: Drama, Adventure • Rated PG

Rise of the Guardians 2D
Thursday 4:30 9:45
Cast: Chris Pine, Hugh Jackman, Alec Baldwin
Genre: Children's/family • Rated PG

Twilight: Breaking Dawn Part 2
Thursday 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:30
Cast: Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson, Taylor Lautner
Genre: Fantasy • Rated PG13

Flight
Thursday 1:10 4:10 7:10 9:55
Cast: Denzel Washington, Don Cheadle, Kelly Reilly
Genre: Drama • Rated R

Skyfall
Thursday 1:15 4:15 7:15 10:00
Cast: Daniel Craig, Judi Dench, Javier Bardem
Genre: Spy film, Action • Rated PG13

Wreck-It Ralph 2D
Thursday 1:20 4:20 7:20 9:40
Cast: John C. Reilly, Sarah Silverman
Genre: Children's/family • Rated PG

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Nicki Minaj on new music and 'American Idol'

By MESFIN FEKADU
AP MUSIC WRITER

AP
Nicki Minaj arrives at the 40th Anniversary American Music Awards on Sunday, Nov. 18, 2012, in Los Angeles.

NEW YORK (AP)—Nicki Minaj, the rapper who has had much success on the pop charts with songs like "Starships" and "Super Bass," says the rerelease of her sophomore album will be nostalgic for her early fans.

"The feel of the rerelease is kind of like my first sound, like the mixtapes," she said of "Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded—The Re-Up," out Tuesday.

The rerelease comes seven months after "Pink Friday: Roman Reloaded" debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard charts. That album features pop, dance, R&B, reggae and rap sounds. It's a far stretch from when Minaj kicked off her career as a sexed-up street rapper, signed by Lil Wayne in 2009 after she released three buzzed-about mixtapes. Her official debut, "Pink Friday," is near double platinum and was nominated for a Grammy Award.

But the 29-year-old says she's "back to basics" on her eight-track "Re-Up," which features Lil Wayne, Tyga and some of Minaj's proteges.

"It sounds probably more hood in some ways, for a lack of a better word," she said.

Her pop fans won't be disappointed, though: There's also the Dr. Luke-produced, dance-flavored "Va Va Voom."

In a recent telephone interview, Minaj talked about her new music, artists she is mentoring and working (kind of) with Mariah Carey on "American Idol."

The Associated Press: What's the energy like on the rerelease?

Minaj: I studied a lot of the production side of this particular rerelease. It was just important that the beats sounded a certain way. ... I was really able to step up the writing on it as well.

AP: This album features some of your signed artists, Parker and Thomas Brinx. How's it feel to pay it forward?

Minaj: It's exciting because I think that I'm finally in a position to open doors for other people and it's a great feeling because I feel like they're so, so talented. Parker, he's actually from London and he's a writer, producer, singer ... and I'm going to be putting out music with him at the top of the year. ... Brinx was someone that I knew for a long time. I was rapping with him before I even got a deal and his skills have always been so exceptional. ... So I always felt like if I got an opportunity I would bring him along and now I have that opportunity.

AP: You let cameras follow you for a three-part reality special on E! What was that like?

Minaj: It's been fun because I think that my fans are getting a real kick out of it. I'm happy I did it. ... I don't really have an opinion on it. It was just a decision for me to show more of myself and I never really know how people are going to react to it, so I've started stepping back and away, and getting away from just overthinking it.

AP: Were you hesitant about doing it?

Minaj: Of course I was hesitant. I'm a very private person. I definitely thought about it a lot and then I went for it.

AP: What are your favorite albums of the year?

Minaj: I really have been enjoying all of the hip-hop albums that came out because I feel like hip-hop artists have been taking their careers into their own hands and I just want to give a salute to everyone because it's not easy. ... The music has been sort of changing and adding new sounds to the game and introducing new people to the game, so I would just give a big nod to hip-hop for 2012.

AP: Is working as a judge on "American Idol" what you thought it would be like?

Minaj: No. ... They're very long days and that's the biggest thing I didn't really expect. ... I'm used to being able to handle my business at any time, and when it's 'American Idol,' sometimes we're in one place for eight hours judging people and I can't go to my BlackBerry every five minutes like I'm used to. So that kind of slows my business down and that is something that I never could have foreseen. But, as a whole, I love the experience that I'm getting.

AP: How are you and Mariah Carey, another new judge on "Idol," getting along?

Minaj: (Click.)

Tolkien heirs sue moviemakers over merchandizing

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—The heirs of late author J.R.R. Tolkien are suing the producers of "The Lord of the Rings" and "The Hobbit" movie trilogies over alleged exploitative merchandizing.

The lawsuit, filed Monday in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles, comes a week before the premiere of the "The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey" in Wellington. The first film in the trilogy hits theaters worldwide next month.

The estate of Tolkien is upset at what it calls "morally questionable" digital marketing including an online slot machine, according to a copy of the lawsuit obtained by The Hollywood Reporter. The Tolkien estate is seeking $80 million from Warner Bros., its New Line subsidiary and rights holder Saul Zaentz Co.

Warner Bros. declined to comment on the claims.

Tolkien's family contends a merchandizing agreement extends only to tangible products such as figurines and clothing and not to electronic rights.

"Not only does the production of gambling games patently exceed the scope of defendants' rights, but this infringing conduct has outraged Tolkien's devoted fan base, causing irreparable harm to Tolkien's legacy and reputation and the valuable goodwill generated by his works," the family claims in the lawsuit.

The family says lengthy discussions with the producers over the disagreement proved fruitless and that it fears the scope of online merchandizing will only increase with the release of the 'Hobbit' movies.

Tolkien's heirs settled a lawsuit over the "Lord of the Rings" movies for an undisclosed amount in 2009, allowing production to proceed on "The Hobbit."

That lawsuit against New Line Cinema claimed Tolkien's trust received only an upfront payment of $62,500 for the three movies before production began but was due 7.5 percent of the gross receipts. The "Rings" films earned an estimated $6 billion from movie tickets, DVDs and merchandise.

'Dog Whisperer' looks forward to new lease on life

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Very soon, Cesar Millan will have a new television show, a book, a tour, a documentary, and—if she says yes—a fiancee.

The year is ending on a high note for Millan as he ends his reign as TV's "Dog Whisperer" and bounces back from a suicide attempt in May 2010 that left him unconscious and hospitalized.

In "Cesar Millan: The Real Story," he talks publicly for the first time about the overdose that almost took his life. The documentary, which airs Nov. 25 on Nat Geo Wild, will also launch a global speaking tour.

"It's rare when someone with his level of celebrity is willing to completely open up and share the struggle and hardship it took to find success and happiness," said Geoff Daniels, executive vice president and general manager of Nat Geo Wild. "Cesar doesn't hold anything back, and I'm certain our audience will feel even closer to him for it."

The 43-year-old Mexican-born dog handler rose to fame in 2004, when his first TV series, "The Dog Whisperer with Cesar Millan," became National Geographic's top-rated show. Millan grew up in Culiacan, the largest city in the Mexican state of Sinaloa, and worked on his grandfather's farm in the hopes of becoming the best dog trainer in the world.

At 21, alone and unable to speak English, he crossed the border and lived on the streets for two months before getting a job as a groomer and walker. Jada Pinkett (pre-Will Smith) hired him and got him an English tutor when she learned he wanted to be on TV.

As his popularity grew, his professional and personal lives appeared rosy: he became an author, made appearances in movies and on television, and his wife gave birth to two sons.

AP

In this March 31, 2012 file photo, One Direction, from left, Niall Horan, Zayn Malik, Louis Tomlinson, Liam Payne, and Harry Styles arrive at Nickelodeon's 25th Annual Kids' Choice Awards in Los Angeles.

One Direction's 2nd CD hits No. 1, sells 540K

NEW YORK (AP)—One Direction's "Take Me Home" is the taking the boys to the top of the charts—and to new heights.

The London group's sophomore album has sold 540,000 in its first week, according to Nielsen SoundScan. It's the year's third-highest debut behind Taylor Swift's "Red," which sold 1.2 million units its first week earlier this month, and Mumford & Sons' "Babel," which sold more than 600,000 albums in September in its debut week.

"We just want to say a massive thanks to all the fans who have supported us," band member Harry Styles, 18, said in an interview Tuesday from London. "We can send tweets and thank them, but 140 characters is never going be enough to say how much it means."

The album also debuted at No. 1 in the United Kingdom this week. The fivesome's debut, "Up All Night," came in at No. 2 in the United Kingdom last year; it was just released in March in America, where it hit No. 1 and has achieved platinum status.

"We were a little bit nervous about how people were going to take it," 19-year-old Niall Horan said of the new album during tour rehearsals. "Everyone gets that second album syndrome."

They say though they're excited, they won't be celebrating too much: "We're finishing rehearsing soon and we're going home to bed."

One Direction, who placed third on the U.K. version of "The X Factor" in 2010, is managed by Simon Cowell. In just a year, the band has become worldwide sensations, thanks to its feverish fans. They released a book and have a Nickelodeon show and 3-D movie planned. They also made the cut for Barbara Walters' most fascinating people of 2012 list, which includes New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and U.S. gold medalist Gabby Douglas.

One Direction says those experiences have helped the group mature.

"We've been working hard. We're starting to grow up," Horan said. "We're still young, but we've passed the initial teenage years. ...We've grown up quite quick in the job we have to do and we became a lot more independent."

The group—which includes Zayn Malik, Liam Payne and Louis Tomlinson—will launch a worldwide tour in February. They hope to work with Katy Perry and are still trying to adjust to the celebrity and fame that has taken over their lives.

"I can see how it gets to people. I guess it's quite easy to get wrapped up in it all," Styles said. "We do the same things every other lad our age does. We go out, we have fun, we meet girls and stuff like that. Sometimes it gets written about, which, yeah, we think about it and it's absolutely crazy. It's still a bit weird thinking that that's the way it is."

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Fiona Apple postpones tour to be with dying dog

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Fiona Apple is postponing her South American tour to be with her dying dog, Janet. Apple says in a heartfelt, handwritten letter to fans posted on her website and Facebook page Tuesday that the nearly 14-year-old Pit bull is her best friend, mother, daughter and benefactor and "the one who taught me what love is." Apple says Janet suffers from Addison's Disease and is near death. The singer writes, "I will not be the woman who puts her career ahead of love and friendship," and asks her fans for their blessings and patience. Apple says she is staying home "and reveling in the swampiest, most awful breath that ever emanated from an angel" and plans to reschedule her South American appearances.

Springsteen, Bon Jovi join Sandy NJ Relief Fund

MENDHAM, New Jersey (AP)—Bruce Springsteen and Jon Bon Jovi are among the New Jersey natives joining a special fund created in the wake of Superstorm Sandy. The musicians will serve on the advisory board of the Hurricane Sandy New Jersey Relief Fund. The nonprofit was created by state first lady Mary Pat Christie to aid in the long-term recovery effort following the storm. The board has raised more than $16 million so far. Springsteen says he knows people will rally together to help neighbors to "come back better and stronger." Bon Jovi says the damage and devastation are unimaginable.

Rock stars pay costs of tapestry to honor Havel

PRAGUE (AP)—Rock stars Bono, The Edge, Peter Gabriel, Sting and Yoko Ono Lennon have covered the cost of a tapestry that will be unveiled next month to honor Vaclav Havel at Prague's international airport, that has been renamed to honor the late Czech president. The airport says the tapestry, which has been designed by the Czech-born New York-based artist Petr Sis, will be unveiled at a ceremony on Dec. 9. The musicians donated a total of 1.5 million koruna ($76,000) to cover the project proposed by Bill Shipsey, the founder of Art for Amnesty, a project of artists supporting the Amnesty International. Havel was the dissident playwright who led the 1989 revolution that toppled four decades of communist rule before becoming the country's president. He died in December 2011, aged 75.

Security fears force removal of Prince William pix

LONDON (AP)—Security fears have prompted authorities to briefly remove images showing the day-to-day working life of Britain's Prince William from his website. Britain's Ministry of Defense says the images were taken down after an "administrative oversight" meant that they had not received proper military clearance. The pictures showing the second in line to the throne going through his daily routine as a Royal Air Force search and rescue pilot included images of unclassified user names, passwords and computer screens. The ministry said in a statement Tuesday that passwords and user names were reset as a precaution and that the photos were reissued. The 10 images on the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's website show him getting himself a cup of tea and making his own bed, among other routine tasks.

Starz cancels 'Boss' after 2 seasons

CHICAGO (AP)—Starz television network has decided not to give Kelsey Grammer another term as mayor of Chicago. The cable network said Tuesday that it was canceling the drama "Boss" after two seasons. The show premiered to critical acclaim, starring Grammer as tyrannical Chicago mayor Tom Kane. The role earned Grammer a Golden Globe for best actor in a drama earlier this year. Starz says in a statement that although the network is proud of the show, it has "made the difficult decision to not proceed with 'Boss.'" The move was a flip-flop for Starz, which renewed the show for a second season even before its first season began. "Boss" also stars Martin Donovan, Connie Nielsen and Kathleen Robertson. Farhad Safinia is the show's creator and executive producer.

Jury deliberating in trial of ex-'Melrose' actress

SOMERVILLE, New Jersey (AP)—A jury is deciding whether a former "Melrose Place" actress is guilty of aggravated manslaughter for a 2010 crash that killed a 60-year-old woman. Amy Locane-Bovenizer has been on trial in Somerset County since early October. After receiving instructions from the judge, jurors began deliberating Tuesday afternoon and concluded at about 4 p.m. without a verdict. They will resume Wednesday morning. Locane-Bovenizer's blood-alcohol level was nearly three times the legal limit when the crash occurred on a dark two-lane road in central New Jersey. The defense concedes the actress was driving under the influence but claims a woman was chasing her for several miles after an earlier accident, forcing her to drive above the speed limit. She faces up to 30 years in prison if convicted.

Mom and daughter disconnect over phone-answering etiquette

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My daughter thinks if people are busy they should not answer the phone. I believe it's better to answer and tell the person you're busy and that you will return their call. Sometimes she doesn't call me back for nine hours or even the next day. Then I find out she was watching a movie or walking her dog, and didn't think my call was "important" enough to respond promptly. As her mother, if I don't hear back, I start to worry, even though she's in her 20s and married with a family.

When she calls me and I say I'm busy and will call her back, she gets mad and says I shouldn't have answered at all. Will you please tell us what you think?

KARI IN MONTANA

DEAR KARI: OK. I think that for your daughter to keep you waiting nine hours for a return call if she can answer more promptly shows a lack of respect for your feelings. And for you to obsess that something awful might have happened is a waste of your time because, trust me, bad news travels fast. It's also possible that you may be calling too often. But only you can answer that.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Some members of my family continually ask me for money. I feel obligated because they are family and they helped me in the past. But since then, I have turned my life around.

I have a great job, a home and I'm in a serious relationship. This isn't the first time they have asked. I have tried refusing, but they persist and after a while I feel guilty.

This is creating a rift between my girlfriend and me. She feels these family members need to take responsibility for their own problems and make choices to better themselves rather than rely on others to enable their bad habits. How do I put an end to this annoyance?

CASHED OUT

DEAR CASHED OUT: There is a difference between giving people money to enable them to continue making poor choices, and giving them money if they are really in need. Because your relatives helped you when you needed money to tide you over, there is a moral obligation for you to reciprocate if they are truly in need.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: When I met my husband he was married. I told him at first that I was not interested. But as time went on he ended up divorcing his wife. We have been together for 11 years, married for three.

The problem is his kids. They are all adults. His youngest was 15 when he left. The daughter is angry and blames me for his leaving. This was not the first time he had left her mother. He had a child from another relationship who was conceived during one of his absences.

I am getting tired of the drama and I'm about ready to divorce him for my peace of mind. During the time we have been together he has never strayed and has always been there for me. Should we divorce?

SECOND WIFE IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR SECOND WIFE: Heck, no! If you love your husband, stick with him. Because your husband's daughter is creating drama, he should set her straight. She may feel that he didn't love HER enough to stay, when the truth is that his marriage to her mother had been on the rocks for years. He should also make sure she understands that if she wants him in her life, she will need to make an attitude adjustment.

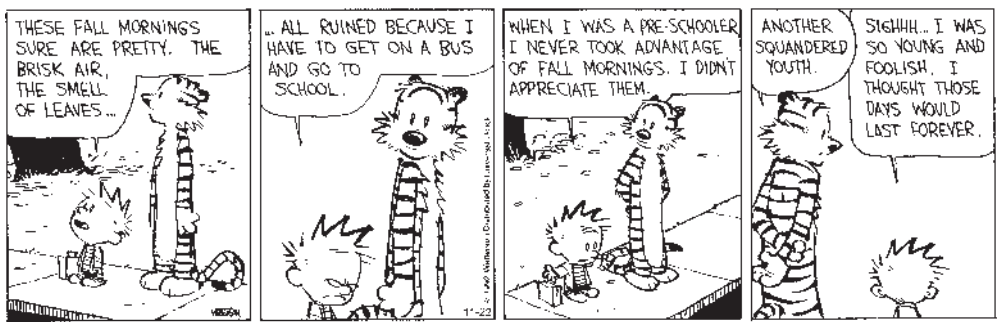
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $14 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


THESE FALL MORNINGS SURE ARE PRETTY. THE BRISK AIR, THE SMELL OF LEAVES...
...ALL RUINED BECAUSE I HAVE TO GET ON A BUS AND GO TO SCHOOL.
WHEN I WAS A PRE-SCHOOLER I NEVER TOOK ADVANTAGE OF FALL MORNINGS. I DIDN'T APPRECIATE THEM.
ANOTHER SQUANDERED YOUTH.
SIGHHH... I WAS SO YOUNG AND FOOLISH. I THOUGHT THOSE DAYS WOULD LAST FOREVER.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

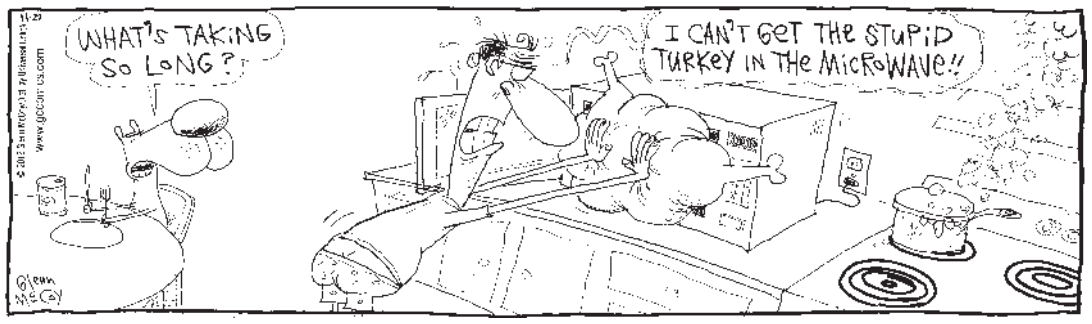
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

IS IT LEGAL TO PUT A DOG ON A SLIDE?
I DON'T THINK SO.
MAYBE SHE'D REALLY LIKE IT.
HOW WOULD YOU GET HER UP THERE?
YOU COULD HAND HER UP TO ME.
OH, UM, BUT I'M NOT ALLOWED TO LIFT DOGS.
THERE WAS THIS HORRIBLE CHIHUAHUA ACCIDENT.
SOUNDS MORE LIKE BULLMASTIFF.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Speedometer stat
4 Puncturing tools
8 Into the sunset
12 Savings plan acronym
13 Biblical boatwright
14 Eastern potentate
15 Wanting company
17 One of the Jackson 5
18 Margery of nursery-rhyme fame
19 Played aloud, as a TV
21 Without a cent
24 Winter woe
25 Year, in Uruguay
26 Snitch
28 Square dance group
32 Rickey flavoring
34 Shrill bark
36 Genealogy chart
37 Put forth
39 Cookie holder
41 Coffee vessel
42 U.K. flyers
44 Burns or Browning
46 Serving piece
50 Astronaut Grissom
51 Floater
52 Boring
56 Con
57 Culture medium
58 Scratch
59 Uncategorized (abbr.)
60 Legislations
61 Early bird?

DOWN
1 Wire measure
2 Expert
3 Good-looking
4 "Jeopardy!" clue, e.g.
5 Court
6 Mary's follower
7 Ledge
8 Diving garb
9 Send forth
10 Location
11 Walked (on)
16 Corrode
20 Hearty brew
21 Hay bundle
22 Alternative to Windows
23 Rotation duration
27 — Mahal
29 Macabre
30 Frau's mate
31 Camp shelter
33 Unsteady
35 Standard
38 Highlander's hat
40 Astaire's frequent partner
43 Of the unborn
45 Urban transport
46 Pull an all-nighter
47 Hindu princess
48 Little salamanders
49 Latvia's capital
53 Uncooked
54 Periodical, briefly
55 Work measure

Solution time: 25 mins.

S	P	Y		T	U	C	K	■	E	L	A	N
T	C	A		Q	G	E	C		R	E	M	O
U	R	N		S	H	E	E	P	S	K	I	N
B	I	G	O	T	■	■	I	F	A	■	■	■
■	■	■	W	A	R	M	■	A	T	L	A	S
S	K	I	N	D	E	E	P	■	Z	O	N	E
P	I	N	■	A	N	D	E	S	■	K	I	T
A	L	I	O	■	D	E	E	P	D	I	S	H
S	T	O	R	M	■	A	N	O	N	■	■	■
■	■	■	P	E	T	■	■	R	A	B	B	I
D	I	S	H	W	A	T	E	R	■	I	F	T
A	S	E	A	■	C	O	M	A	■	E	T	C
G	M	E	N	■	T	O	O	N	■	D	A	H

Yesterday's answer 11-22

1	2	3	■	4	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12			■	13				■	14			
15			16					■	17			
■	■	18			■	19		20				
21	22				23	■	24			■	■	■
25			■	26		27	■	28		29	30	31
32			33	■	34		35	■	36			
37				38	■	39		40	■	41		
■	■	■	42		43	■	44		45			
46	47	48				49	■	50			■	■
51				■	52		53				54	55
56				■	57				■	58		
59				■	60				■	61		

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute. touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Scarlett Johansson, 28; Mark Ruffalo, 45; Jamie Lee Curtis, 54; Steve Van Zandt, 62.

Happy Birthday: Taking a realistic approach to whatever you pursue will be vital if you want to avoid setbacks. Truth will play an important role in how things develop personally and when dealing with friends, relatives and authority figures. Focus on what you can do for others, not what you can get in return. Your numbers are 4, 8, 12, 23, 35, 37, 48.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Take one step at a time. Precision will be what makes you successful. Emotional impatience and unpredictability will stand between you and advancement. Listen to your head and take the practical approach to whatever you face. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Take the initiative and instigate what you want to see happen. Partnerships, interviews and business meetings can all be dealt with practically. Personal partnerships will highlight your day and keep up your spirits and confidence. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Discipline must be implemented if you want to finish what you start. Don't allow anyone to sidetrack you—it will end up costing you. A contract, settlement or other personal paperwork must be addressed without overreacting—pick and choose wisely. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You'll be right on the money. Don't procrastinate or wait to see what others do. Be a leader, not a follower. You have what it takes to excel if you follow your heart and your instincts. Mixing business with pleasure will ensure success. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Take on a new project or look for an unusual pastime that will motivate you to move in different circles. Troubles at home or with friends will disrupt your plans if you don't put distance between you and poor influences. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Meetings, talks and dealing with experienced individuals will lead to solid plans that will help you move in new directions. Someone needing exactly what you have to offer will recognize your talents. Love and romance are looking good. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Learn from past experience. Remember what you witnessed during your growing years and apply the knowledge you gained to a situation you face. A problem with regard to real estate contracts or a partnership must be dealt with swiftly. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Check out items that you think you might like to purchase or services you may want to use to make your life easier. Home improvements will brighten your mood and enhance a relationship that means a lot to you. Love is highlighted. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Honor a promise or find a solution that will help redeem your reputation. Diplomacy will be required both at home and at work. Call in a favor if it will allow you to outmaneuver someone trying to make you look bad. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Load up your plate and show everyone what you are capable of handling. Your diplomatic approach will help control a situation you face with a friend or neighbor. Love is on the rise, and making romantic plans will pay off. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Demanding people will stand in your way. Focus on what you can accomplish on your own. Stick close to home and you'll avoid an unsavory encounter with someone unreasonable. Decorate your home to suit your comfort and needs. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Listen, observe and prepare to make your move personally or professionally. An improved reputation will be due to recognition for something you accomplished. A unique approach to money, legal and health issues will bring good results. Love is highlighted. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are determined, organized and willful. You are persuasive and creative.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	1							
			7	3				5
		6			1	2		
		4	5		6		8	
	5			8			4	
	2		1		9	5		
		7	8			1		
4				5	7			
							2	

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/22

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

8	7	5	9	3	4	2	6	1
3	1	6	8	5	2	9	7	4
9	2	4	1	6	7	8	3	5
7	4	9	2	8	6	1	5	3
5	3	1	7	4	9	6	2	8
6	8	2	3	1	5	4	9	7
2	5	3	4	9	1	7	8	6
1	6	7	5	2	8	3	4	9
4	9	8	6	7	3	5	1	2

Difficulty Level ★★★ 11/21

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

THE JOHNSTOWN INCLINED PLANE **Solution: 7 letters**

T	T	C	E	E	I	W	W	P	S	R	T	H	L	S
R	R	O	L	H	L	N	E	H	R	I	H	T	I	K
A	U	N	G	O	T	E	C	I	E	D	G	O	F	N
V	C	N	N	I	T	O	C	L	V	E	I	O	E	I
E	K	E	A	S	R	O	O	T	I	A	L	M	S	L
L	S	C	D	T	Y	D	U	B	R	N	L	S	A	O
A	Ⓓ	T	N	S	E	O	E	R	R	I	E	L	V	B
M	L	Ⓔ	E	S	P	O	D	R	I	A	C	D	E	B
P	T	A	Ⓒ	E	O	L	D	E	S	S	K	A	R	Y
S	T	E	S	Ⓚ	L	F	L	A	R	S	T	E	P	S
S	N	G	A	E	S	T	O	I	O	R	O	U	T	E
D	O	C	A	R	R	Y	H	I	H	L	O	N	G	N
C	A	M	B	R	I	A	C	O	U	N	T	Y	O	A
N	S	L	I	A	R	A	L	U	C	I	H	E	V	L
A	E	R	A	I	N	A	V	L	Y	S	N	N	E	P

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Angle, Area, Ascend, Booth, Brake, Cambria County, Carry, Cogs, Connect, Deck, Descend, Electric, Flood, Girders, Hill, Hoists, Hold, Inclined, Lamps, Laser, Lifesaver, Light, Link, Load, Lobby, Long, Pennsylvania, Plane, Rails, Ride, Rivers, Route, Seats, Slope, Smooth, Steel, Steep, Steps, Tourist, Travel, Trucks, Valley, Vehicular, View, Wheels, Yoder

Yesterday's Answer: Nucleolus

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CLASSIFIED ADS

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Baker. Experienced in baking breads, cakes, pizza & pastries. Please call 287-6532.

(1) General Maintenance. Salary $5.55/hr. If interested please call Tinian Express Corp. at 285-7445 for more info.

Building Maintenance (1)–knowledge of carpentry and electrical work. Apply at Kanda International, Inc. P.O. Box 503275. Tel. 235-2505.

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2 Bedroom Apartment for Rent. For $200.00 / month. Koblerville, please call 288-0728.

Fina Sisu Apt., 1-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. $250/mo. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call for an appointment 235-6527/8 or 285-1317.

Fina Sisu Apt., 2-BR, 1-BTH, FF, AC, BU Genset/24-hr water, security, laundry room, free Wi-Fi & ample parking. Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted. $450-$550/mo. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call for an appointment 235-6527/8 or 285-1317.

Ocean View Terraces. Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apts w/private balcony & beautiful view. Rooms w/ A/C & Fully Furnished. Back-up Generator. Free Wi-Fi. Laundry Area. Nightime security. $600/mo. Pls. visit our website www.saipan-properties.com. Call for an appointment 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

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Saipan Tribune

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Lower Navy Hill Apts. Newly renovated bldg., 3BR & 2BTH. Rooms w/ A/C & fully furnished. Back-up generator. Free Wi-Fi, EPA Solar Water Heater. Laundry area. Nightime security. $450/mo. Call for an appointment 235-6527/28 or 285-1317.

Pacific Marine Enterprises, Inc.
Job Vacancy Announcement • Closing Date: Dec. 1, 2012

Admin/Executive Coordinator

Knowledge Required:
- B.S. in Business Admin, QC of CADD Drawings, Marketing Skills/Degree, Payroll Processing/Minor Typing, & Database/Excel Experience

E-mail resume and history to tjddave@hotmail.com

WANTED TO HIRE

WAITER/WAITRESS
- Must be a U.S. Citizen
- Must be 21 yrs. old & above
- 2 years work related experience required

COOK
2 years work related experience required
- CW1 is accepted

Walk-in applicants only, with picture.
No phone calls.
Deadline: November 23, 2012

Country House/ Moby Dick Restaurant

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Yano Enterprises, Inc.

General Maintenance (2): Must have a valid CNMI driver's license and flexible in work hours. Duties may involve skills in electrical, plumbing, carpentry, masonry, painting, landscape or maintain grounds of property using hand or power tools or equipment. Can typically perform variety of task such as sod laying, mowing, trimming, planting, watering, fertilizing, digging, raking and installing, repairing buildings, floors or stairs.

Chief Cook (1): Must be experienced in supervising and coordinating orders, operations and other cooks. Must be able to inspect and standardize raw & cooked food as well as the presentation of dishes. Be able to develop innovative recipes & menus of Japanese cuisine which take in factors such as seasonal availability of ingredients & customer orientation & pax.

Cook (1): Must be experienced & skilled in preparing Japanese cuisine including but not limited to sushi, sashimi, & tempura. Can prepare all menu items according to quantity menus. Must be able to maintain kitchen & observe safety & sanitary food handling practices as well as other related duties.

Additional Requirements: All applicants must be of good health and have a good moral character, must be able to follow grooming standards, must be able to obtain health certificate, must be able to provide current police clearance, with reliable transportation and must agree to drug test.

Applicants of positions listed above are required to have a minimum of 3-5 years experience. Applications can be picked up at Kinpachi Restaurant I Garapan, Hotel Street. No phone calls.

WHATZIT Solution: Star Wars

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$100 Security Deposit Required
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For Immediate Hiring
• Japanese Cook
• Sushi Cook
At least 5 years experience in cutting fish and making sushi.
For more details, call Mr. Suzuki at 233-1530

CHONG'S CORPORATION
Job Vacancy Announcement

Four (4) TECHNICIANS-AIR CONDITIONING & REFRIGERATION
- Install, service and repair of Central Air-conditioning, Refrigeration and Ventilation Systems
- Repair and service of Chilled Water Air-conditioning System
- Perform repair and trouble analysis of VAV and VVT Control Systems
- Perform Computer based Control System

Other Requirements:
- Minimum 10-year work experience required
- EPA Section 608 & R-410A Certifications required
- Maintenance Technician & Electrical Safety Course in Accordance with 29CFR 1910 Standard Certification required
- Must possess good communication skill

E-mail resume to chongs@pticom.com

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

(1) COMMERCIAL CLEANER

High school diploma, minimum 5 years prior hotel experience. Keep premises clean and orderly condition. Use of power equipment/hand tools, transport linens, supplies, and making up beds and perform other duties described as a cleaner. Police clearance required. $ 5.55/hr. Interested applicants can apply at the Aquarius Beach Tower, 110 Beach Road. Applications must be submitted by November 23rd.

No phone calls please.

POI Aviation invites qualified US workers to apply for the following position:

Accountant

Associate's Degree in Finance or Accounting with at least 3 years work related experience in financial management and/or payroll and general accounting procedures with emphasis on receivables and payable management. Proficient in the use of SAP R3 FICO system and MS Excel, Word and Power Point software. Must be able to work under time pressure and must work flexible hours. CPA not required.

Deadline: November 23, 2012
For details, please contact the Human Resources Office at 288-0360.

Equal Employment Opportunity Employer

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

MISA ENTERPRISES, INC.

ASSISTANT MANAGER (1): Be able to assist the General Manager in the supervision of the business establishment such as: Management of financial books, rental client agreement, building maintenance such as answering tenants' complain & resolve problems. Confer with manager to review financial statements, activity reports and other performance data to determine areas needing cost reduction and improvement. Allocate funds; authorize expenditures necessary for building maintenance. Delegate authority and assign responsibilities to designate personnel for building maintenance, be able to present written & oral reports on the company's financial and operational status. Other related duties as Assistant Manager.

Additional Requirements: All applicants must be of good health and have a good moral character, must be able to provide current police clearance. With reliable transportation and must agree to drug test.

Applicants of position listed above are required to have a minimum of 3-5 years experience. Applications can be picked up at Kinpachi Restaurant, MISA Building 4, Coral Tree Avenue, Garapan. No phone calls.

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 5-day run in both print and online editions, for as low as $30 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS	(PRINT)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$15	$30
• 5-Liner	$24	$45

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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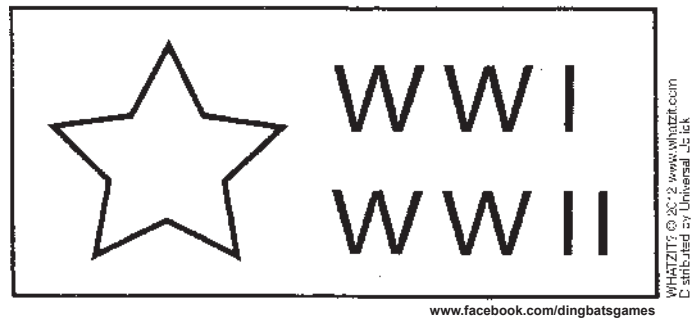

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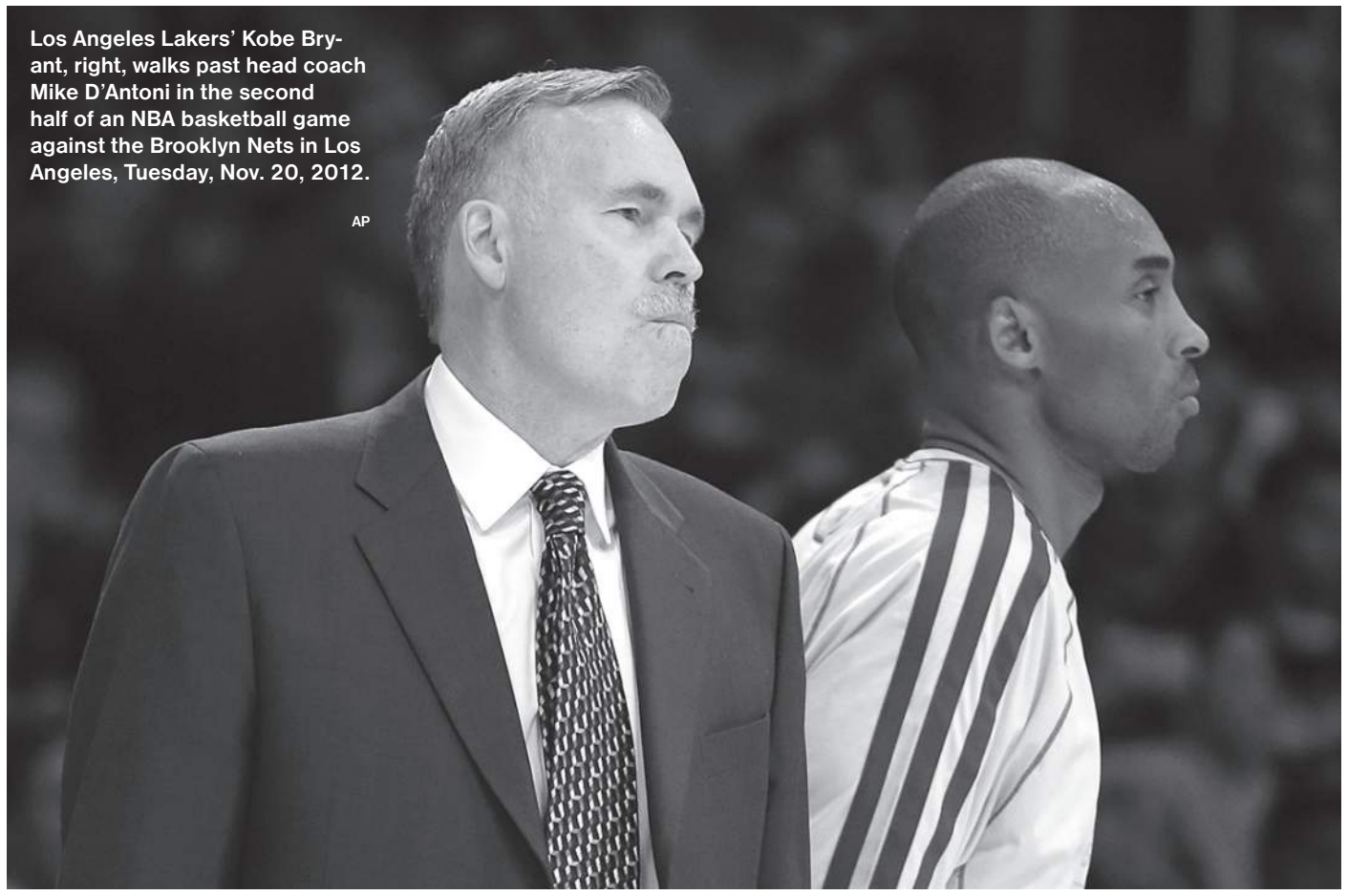
Lakers hold off Nets, win D'Antoni's debut



Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant, right, walks past head coach Mike D'Antoni in the second half of an NBA basketball game against the Brooklyn Nets in Los Angeles, Tuesday, Nov. 20, 2012.

AP

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Kobe Bryant scored six of his 25 points in the final two minutes, and the Los Angeles Lakers hung on for a 95-90 victory over the Brooklyn Nets on Tuesday night in coach Mike D'Antoni's sideline debut.

Dwight Howard had 23 points and 15 rebounds despite a horrific 7-for-19 performance at the free-throw line for the Lakers, who have won five of six and moved above .500 since firing Mike Brown.

Although D'Antoni is still unsteady on his surgically replaced knee, he coached Los Angeles to a narrow victory that snapped Brooklyn's five-game winning streak.

Brook Lopez scored 23 points and Deron Williams had 22 for the Nets, who missed five of their last six shots in their ninth consecutive loss to the Lakers.

Pau Gasol and Metta World Peace scored 17 points apiece as the Lakers wrapped up a tumultuous six-game homestand that began with coach Mike Brown's unexpected firing 11 days ago.

The Lakers went 4-1 under interim coach Bernie Bickerstaff, but D'Antoni finally took over the bench nine days after he was hired. Los Angeles largely couldn't play at his favored tempo, but D'Antoni quickly learned the benefits of coaching Bryant, who took over in the final minutes.

After taking a narrow lead through three quarters, the Lakers missed their first seven shots in the fourth and fell behind mostly due to their All-Star center's incompetence at the line. Brooklyn deliberately fouled Howard in the fourth quarter, when he went 3 for 10.

Los Angeles still took the lead on Gasol's free throw with 2:37 to play, and Bryant hit a running hook shot after Joe Johnson airballed a jumper moments later. Johnson cut the lead to one point on a fast-break layup with 36 seconds left, but Bryant hit four free throws in the final 17.1 seconds while Williams missed a potential tying 3-pointer with 4 seconds left.

Johnson scored 14 points for the Nets, who finish their three-game California road trip at Golden State on Wednesday night.

D'Antoni nearly debuted on the Lakers' sideline two nights earlier against Houston, but was persuaded to delay by trainer Gary Vitti, who was concerned about the 61-year-old's mobility and late-game fatigue. D'Antoni felt much stronger after two more days of rest and room service at his hotel, and he eagerly got on the court without the aid of the crutches that kept him upright during his first practice last week.

D'Antoni clearly isn't at full strength: He hobbled slowly on the sideline on the rare occasions he left his chair during play in the first half. He moved around with more vigor after halftime, protesting foul calls with his usual theatrical vehemence despite a slight limp in his step.

Since D'Antoni took over practices last Thursday, the Lakers ran their last two opponents off the court with up-tempo offense in the first half. Los Angeles scored 40 points in the first quarter of a win over Houston on Sunday night, and Nets coach Avery Johnson claimed his team couldn't play at that pace - yet Brooklyn consistently got more fast-break production all night, outscoring the Lakers 26-7.

After the Lakers scored the game's first 10 points against Brooklyn, Johnson's team got the game back to its preferred tempo. With Lopez and Williams breaking down their defenders for good shots in a half-court offense, the Nets led the Lakers 57-56 at halftime.

Williams was particularly effective against Darius Morris, the third-string point guard thrust into a starting role with injuries to Steve Nash and Steve Blake. Williams employed his vicious crossover move multiple times, forcing Morris to commit three first-half fouls.

Knicks 102, Hornets 80

In New Orleans, Carmelo Anthony scored 29 points and the Knicks extended the undermanned New Orleans Hornets' losing streak to four games.

Raymond Felton and J.R. Smith each added 15 points. Felton scored all of his points on five 3-pointers as New York hit 14 3s as a team.

Tyson Chandler grabbed 12 rebounds for the Knicks, who've won two straight since their first loss of the season and are 8-1 for only the third time in franchise history.

Ryan Anderson, starting in place of Anthony Davis, led the Hornets with 15 points. Davis was ruled out shortly before tip-off because tenderness in his left ankle.

76ers 106, Raptors 98

In Philadelphia, Jason Richardson scored six of his 21 points late in the fourth quarter, Nick Young had 23 off the bench and the 76ers rallied to beat Toronto.

Jrue Holiday had 19 points and 12 assists and Thad Young scored 18 to help the Sixers win their third straight game.

DeMar DeRozan had 24 and Andrea Bargnani scored 22 for the Raptors, who are off to a 3-8 start.

Down 87-80 early in the fourth, the Sixers came back to win their first game in which they trailed after three quarters.

Blue Jays hire John Gibbons as manager again

TORONTO (AP)—Blue Jays President Paul Beeston couldn't believe it when he learned the Blue Jays had the chance to land three star players from the Miami Marlins last week. He was equally surprised when his general manager told him he wanted to hire John Gibbons to manage the Blue Jays again.

"They were back-to-back shockers," Beeston said with a laugh.

General manager Alex Anthopoulos unexpectedly hired Gibbons as his new manager on Tuesday, a day after a megadeal with the Miami Marlins reinvigorated the roster and raised expectations the Blue Jays will make the playoffs for the first time since winning their second consecutive World Series in 1993. Only Kansas City and Pittsburgh have longer playoff droughts.

"I said `Are you serious?'" Beeston recalled. "Forget about him being an intellectual, he's a baseball guy. And those are the guys you really want in your organization."

Gibbons managed Toronto 2004-08 and had a 305-305 record, making him the third-winningest manager in franchise history.

He succeeds John Farrell, who spurned Toronto for his dream managing job in Boston. Gibbons takes over a very different team from the one Farrell managed.

The surprise announcement came a day after the Blue Jays completed the trade to acquire All-Star shortstop Jose Reyes and pitchers Josh Johnson and Mark Buehrle from Miami. Toronto agreed to the trade last week and Commissioner Bud Selig approved it Monday. The Blue Jays, extraordinarily busy in this offseason, also finalized a $16 million, two-year contract with free agent outfielder Melky Cabrera.

Gibbons said he never imagined he'd be hired by Toronto again.

"Who wouldn't want to be here?" Gibbons said. "The front office has put together a legitimate contending-type team."

Yankees general manager Brian Cashman is well aware the AL East has gotten even more competitive because of Toronto's recent moves.

"I know the sleeping giant that exists up there. It's a great baseball town," Cashman said in a conference call with New York beat writers. "Last year wasn't a true reflection of how good they could have been because they got derailed with injuries and unexpected underperformance."

Anthopoulos said he wanted someone he was familiar with. Anthopoulos was an assistant GM when Gibbons managed Toronto. Gibbons joins Cito Gaston as managers serving two stints with the Blue Jays.

"I don't know that there was anybody better in terms of managing a bullpen, connecting with the players, connecting with the front office, holding players accountable," Anthopoulos said.

His best season was in 2006, when Toronto went 87-75 to finish second in the division— the same season he had a well-publicized blowup with players Shea Hillenbrand Ted Lilly. Gibbons said he regrets the physical altercation with Hillenbrand and called it a black eye, but Anthopoulos defended him and said if you can't play for Gibbons then you can't play for too many guys.

Jack Taylor scores 138 points for Grinnell

By LUKE MEREDITH
AP SPORTS WRITER

After a poor shooting weekend, Grinnell guard Jack Taylor was given the green light to shoot his way out of a slump.

It only took 108 shots for Taylor to make a mockery of the college basketball record books.

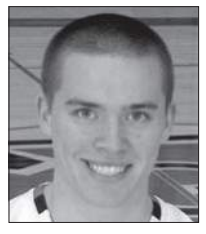
Taylor scored 138 points to shatter the NCAA scoring record in Division III Grinnell's 179-104 victory over Faith Baptist Bible on Tuesday night in Grinnell, Iowa.

Taylor, a 5-foot-10, 170-pound sophomore from Black River Falls, Wis., made 27 of 71 3-point attempts, was 52 of 108 overall from the field and added seven free throws on 10 attempts in 36 minutes.

"It felt like anything I tossed up was going in," Taylor told The Associated Press.

Rio Grande's Bevo Francis held the NCAA scoring record with 113 points against Hillsdale in 1954. In 1953, Francis had 116 against Ashland Junior College. Frank Selvy is the only other player to reach triple figures, scoring 100 points for Division I Furman against Newberry in 1954. The previous Grinnell record was 89 by Griffin Lentsch last Nov. 19 against Principia.

Under coach David Arseneault, the Pioneers press and shoot 3s like nobody else in the country in any level. They've led the nation in scoring for 17 of the past 19 seasons while ranking first nationally in 3-point shooting for the 15 of those past 19 years. But none of them have had a night quite like Taylor—who never saw this coming.



Taylor

Taylor recently transferred to Grinnell, located about 50 miles east of Des Moines, after playing one season for Wisconsin-La Crosse. He struggled in his debut at the nearby Wartburg Tournament over the weekend by hitting only 11 of 41 shots—including only 6 of 34 3-point attempts Still, he averaged 23.5 points a game.

But Taylor started Tuesday's night game off slow - at least according to his standards. His coaches figured the best way to get him on track was for him to keep chucking, so that's what Taylor did.

"Maybe my cold shooting from the weekend was affecting me," Taylor said. "But then they started to drop."

Taylor had 58 points at halftime.

Then he got hot.

Taylor was 32 of 58 shooting—including 18 3s—in the final 20 minutes and averaged an astounding four points a minute in the second half.

"I don't think reality has set in yet," Taylor said.

Faith Baptist's David Larson also had a big game, scoring 70 points on 34-of-44 shooting.

Carmelo Anthony and the New York Knicks were amazed by Taylor's feat when they heard about it after their victory in New Orleans.

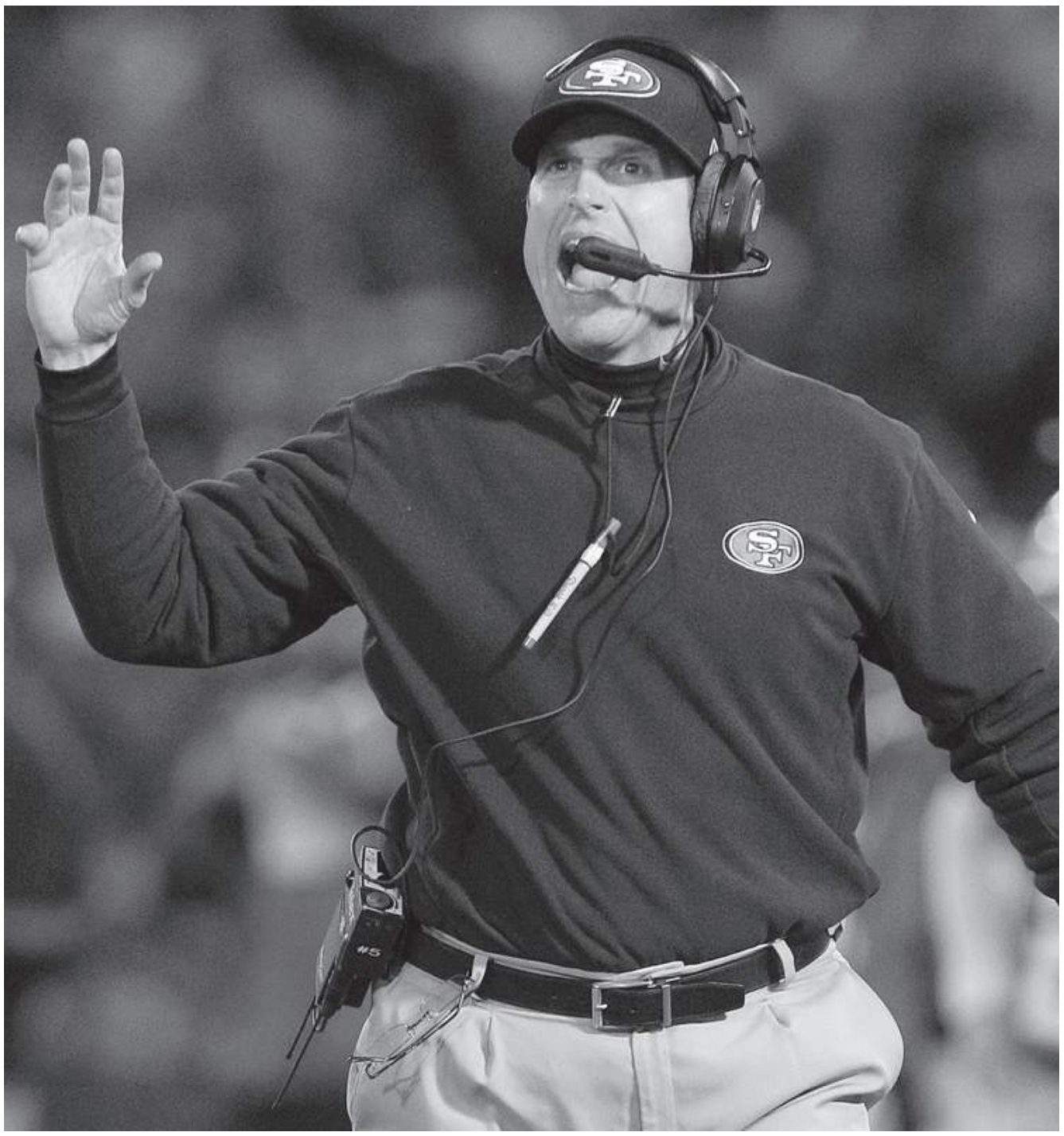
"I never heard of nothing like that. That's like a video game," Anthony said, an incredulous look on his face. "How can you shoot 100 times, though?"

He joked that from now on when someone asks if he's taking too many shots, he'll mention "that someone shot it 108 times."

Raymond Felton also was astounded by the 108 shots.

"His elbow has got to be sore," Felton said.

Harbaugh undergoing follow-up evaluation on heart



AP

San Francisco 49ers head coach Jim Harbaugh gestures during the second half of an NFL football game against the Chicago Bears in San Francisco, Monday, Nov. 19, 2012.

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—San Francisco 49ers coach Jim Harbaugh had an appointment Tuesday for a follow-up evaluation with doctors after undergoing a minor procedure last Thursday for an irregular heartbeat.

The 49ers canceled Harbaugh's scheduled media conference call minutes before it was to begin Tuesday afternoon, a day after San Francisco's 32-7 victory over the Chicago Bears, but gave no indication that there is anything of further concern with Harbaugh's health in addition to what he went through last week. The 49ers released a schedule with Harbaugh set for his usual Wednesday news conference.

Harbaugh, the reigning NFL Coach of the Year who turns 49 next month, was candid about the "cardiovert"—or an electrical shocking of the heart to treat an irregular heartbeat and restore its rhythm to a normal pattern—he had done at Stanford Hospital after being evaluated last Wednesday night. He has had the condition for most of his life, he said, and was told to improve his diet and cut back on his caffeine intake.

Harbaugh was his typical energetic self on the sideline Monday night with the NFC West-leading Niners (7-2-1), who have a quick turnaround for Sunday's game at New Orleans in a rematch of the NFC divisional playoff game won in a 36-32 thriller by San Francisco at Candlestick Park last January.

What was supposed to be an NFC showdown with the Bears on Monday quickly turned into a rout, with backup quarterback Colin Kaepernick leading the way on a night starter Alex Smith watched from the sideline recovering from a concussion.

Harbaugh—whose team improved to 5-1 in prime time and 3-0 on "Monday Night Football" since he took over before the 2011 season—improved his regular-season coaching record to 20-5-1 and became the fastest active NFL coach to reach 20 victories by reaching the mark in 26 games.

He could face a tough decision on who to start under center against the Saints (5-5).

Kaepernick went 16 for 23 for 243 yards, two touchdowns and an impressive passer rating of 133.1 in his first NFL start. The second-year pro, a second-round draft pick out of Nevada in 2011, hardly seemed fazed by football's big stage. He directed scoring drives on the Niners' initial four possessions and completed 12 of his first 14 passes with a 57-yard throw to Kyle Williams that set up Vernon Davis' 3-yard TD on the next play.

"Thought Colin did an outstanding job," Harbaugh said after the game. "Poise in the pocket, pushing the ball and throwing with accuracy. Did a nice job running the game plan. Everything he did was exemplary, again."

Harbaugh said he would go with the "hot hand" at quarterback, but acknowledged he has a pair of hot hands at the moment in Smith and Kaepernick.

Not that any of his players were about to start predicting who might get the nod come Sunday at the raucous Superdome.

"That's up to the coaches," Davis said. "That's their decision. I'll let them decide and they always call the shots."

Kaepernick earned the respect of his teammates, all right. He credited them for supporting him all week as he prepared to start in place of Smith, who was injured in a 24-24 tie against the St. Louis Rams on Nov. 11.

Kaepernick also threw a 10-yard TD pass to Michael Crabtree in the third quarter.

"I'm not worried about Kaep," Crabtree said. "He's a gamer, he knows one speed and that's go. We know that. It was a great team win."

With Alex Smith's status still unclear, a pair of Smiths on the other side of the ball are doing their part—Justin Smith and Aldon Smith.

Aldon Smith recorded 5 1/2 sacks of the six San Francisco had against Bears backup Jason Campbell, and he has the NFL lead with 15. Smith also stripped Campbell in the end zone for a safety.

"I really just try to make people respect my power," Smith said. "I didn't sense that I was going to go out there and get a bunch of sacks, but I wanted to go out there and make some plays."

Running back Frank Gore gets a good look at the imposing linebacker every day in practice.

"One of the best at the position, if not the best," Gore said. "He works hard every day and he'll go get them."

Cowboys' Dez Bryant could finally be arriving

IRVING, Texas (AP)—Great one game. Hard to find the next. A scene at the mall one year. Trouble with the law the next.

Wide receiver Dez Bryant is the riddle many had feared when character issues allowed the Cowboys to take one of the best players in the 2010 draft late in the first round.

Don't look now, but Bryant has multiple 100-yard receiving games for the first time as a pro, and is coming off a career-high 145 yards and a critical fourth-quarter touchdown against Cleveland. Barring injury or another twist to the story, he'll probably have his first 1,000-yard season.

Now is as good a time as any to ask whether Bryant is finally arriving in his third season, though not even the ultimate Cowboys optimist is ready to give a definitive answer.

"The risk here is that he's in the glaring spotlight of being on the field and off the field for the Cowboys," owner Jerry Jones said. "So I'm reluctant that, we all are, to say that he's doing good. Dez is doing better."

Forget the numbers for a moment. The day after a potential resolution was announced in a domestic dispute with his mother, Bryant all but invited reporters to his locker so he could declare himself ready to put the "focus on football" - a phrase he repeated so often it made him laugh. Laughter of the right sort has been in short supply around Bryant most of his young pro career.

Three days later, he was there when Tony Romo needed him late in the game, matching the steady and reliable Jason Witten with three catches in the fourth quarter, including a 28-yard score that put Dallas ahead, and adding two more in overtime in the 23-20 Dallas win. Romo ended up throwing his way 15 times, and Bryant had 12 catches.

Afterward, Bryant was already talking about trying to do it again in Thursday's Thanksgiving game against Washington.

"With a win, it feels good," Bryant said. "Just got to put it behind me and get ready for Washington."

The previous two games at Cowboys Stadium, Bryant cost Romo an interception each time by not doing what his quarterback thought he would. Not that this time.

"He ran good routes, he was at his right depth and you see the kind of player he can be when he plays football at the level that he can," Romo said. "That's exciting to see his work ethic paying off."

Few have questioned how hard Bryant works in practice, but there have always been questions about how much time he spent with the playbook. The issue of judgment was even larger, mostly because the Cowboys knew it could be.

He lost most of his final college season at Oklahoma State when the NCAA suspended him after he lied about having dinner with former NFL cornerback Deion Sanders. He was criticized for missing team meetings and failing to bring the right shoes to his pro timing day.

Draft day was rough, too, because his name kept falling after he was projected as a top 10 pick. Despair turned to delight when the kid from East Texas was taken by the Cowboys at No. 24.

His first season in Dallas was uneventful—on the field, too. He missed four games and finished with just 561 yards even though he had a 100-yard game.

Then the trouble started. He was kicked out of an upscale Dallas mall in early 2011 for wearing his pants too low, and a week later, lawsuits surfaced alleging that he had nearly $1 million in unpaid bills from jewelry and game tickets, mostly racked up before he signed a five-year contract with $8.3 million in guaranteed money.

Another spotty season on the field in 2011 was followed by the most serious incident, this one involving his arrest last summer. According to an affidavit filed by police in the Dallas suburb of DeSoto, Bryant struck his mother, Angela Bryant, in the face with a ball cap and grabbed her T-shirt.

Bryant's mom didn't want to press charges, and prosecutors announced a deal last week that could lead to the dismissal of a misdemeanor family violence charge if Bryant isn't arrested and regularly attends anger management counseling for the next year.

Witten isn't sure a resolution of the case is the reason Bryant seems ready to be the Cowboys' No. 1 receiver. He just knows it's looking that way, particularly after Bryant helped beat the Browns with so many catches on shorter routes, not usually his strength.

"That's the other part of being a receiver," Witten said. "He understands, `Hey, I'm a go-to guy.' And you know that he wants to be really, really good."

Bryant is still having some of those ill-advised moments, like a play against Cleveland where he easily could have run for a first down and inexplicably stepped out of bounds a yard short when defenders closed in. Afterward, he acknowledged he wasn't sure where the first-down marker was, although he was also trying to follow the advice of coaches not to always take on tacklers.

Three weeks ago, he followed his second 100-yard game of the season with one catch in a big Sunday night game at Atlanta.

"I'm hoping he disappears," Redskins coach Mike Shanahan said with a laugh. "No, he's a tremendous athlete. I think everybody knows that."

The question is whether he can be that go-to guy—all the time.

Pascual, Piamonte top Turkey Shootout

By WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Larry Pascual and Raffy Piamonte won the A and B divisions of Fil-Taga Golfers Association's November of the Month and Turkey Shootout tournament held last Sunday at the Marianas Country Club.

The feats warranted the pair a turkey and a modest cash prize in addition to a berth into the club's finale Ace of Aces tournament, slated for January 2013.

The A class includes members who hold a handicap of 16 or lower, while the B field consists of golfers with handicaps allocated at 17 and above.

Pascual hit the turn with a raw 44 last weekend and finished the back nine strong with a 38 for a gross tally of 82 that was adjusted to a field-low 69-net score.

He bested 11 other A division players and won four strokes against Jhun Calma (73 net, 86 gross) who settled for runner-up honors. Third placer Nazareno Ortic Jr. also fired a 73 net (87 gross) but lost on a scorecard tiebreak.

Piamonte scratched an even 50 on his card after the first nine holes and improved his game on the backside by three strokes for a 97 raw count that was trimmed down to a 73 net score to rule the B division.

He defeated a handful of other B contenders by two strokes as Arnold Galang (102 gross) slid into the passenger seat just ahead of Joseph Fernandez (98) who netted a 77.

Runners-up Calma and Galang also received turkeys as consolation prizes.

Notably, Pascual bagged closest to the pin honors in hole No. 16 in the process, while William Retardo's tee shot earned the nod in hole No. 6, Jhun Ortiz won hole No. 8 and Paul Bea took the prize in hole No. 12.

The victors joined January's A and B Aces Richard Atalig and James Mitchell, February's Randy Tudela, March's Bea, April A and B's Retardo and Ruben Avendano, May's Lito Mendoza, June's Adony Matuitino, July's Mando Guban, August's Nestor Siruelo, September's Dan Ganacias, and October's Calma.

Filtaga's December event is scheduled for Dec. 9. The location is still being determined. Show time is set for noon with a 12:30pm tee off.

There is a required greens fee of $30 in addition to a $15 contribution, which will go toward the prize money.

Fil-Taga tournaments are held once a month usually on the third Sunday of each month. In addition to a berth into the finale event, the winners also receive a modest cash prize; a $300 prize also goes to anyone who manages to sink a hole-in-one.

If more than 20 golfers turn out for an event, two ace winners will be recognized as the group is divided into two separate fields.

New members must pay half of the initial required annual fee ($50), excluding monthly green fees, in order to join the club. The group uses an USGA approved computer-based handicap system, which is regularly updated on their website, www.filtaga.com.

All dues must be settled to be eligible for prizes.

For more information, contact Mike Cruz at 483-7171, Mando Guban at 483-6033, Rene Batallones at 898-3367, or Larry Pascual at 287-1233.

SHIRLEY'S

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survived Wowie Abuel and Arlene Naguit in three games, 21-19, 16-21, 21-16. Then in the women's B doubles, the Japanese partnered with Windy Fernandez in sweeping Jane Tupas and Lot Abuel, 21-14, 21-12. Obata's third match was also won after only two games, as she and Roma Barlao dominated Annette Quiambao and Tupas, 21-14, 21-11.

Talania's second win came in the mixed C, as he joined forces with Barlao in routing Rommel Bartolome and Tupas, 21-5, 21-9. Then in the men's C doubles, Talania connived with Bernard Aquino in downing Jeff Riman and Bartolome, 21-15, 21-14.

Shirley's sixth win against the Berks' Blazers was courtesy of the tandem of Jerry Hibi and Annette Ta, who swept Macoi Aguda and Naguit, 21-7, 21-18.

Meanwhile, three of the Berks Blazers' four victories came from Lani Bartolome. The team's top female player teamed up with Ferdie Arago and together they triumphed over Joseph Santos and Elma Labuson in the mixed A doubles. Then in the women's AB, Bartolome joined hands with Quiambao in slipping past Fernandez and Camille Bocago, 14-21, 21-18, 21-15. For the women's A doubles, Bartolome partnered with Marlene Peraja and they swept Mulan Ta and Kimberly Ocampo, 21-8, 21-8.

Bartolome's siblings, Wowie and Lot Abuel, took the other win for the Berks Blazers, as the brother-and-sister pair thwarted Chris Hilario and Fernandez in the mixed BB doubles, 17-21, 21-11, 21-19.

With their second straight loss, the Berks Blazers dropped to an even 45-45 record (games won/games loss). They will have their final assignment in the round-robin tournament this weekend when they face the Golden Racquets (35-25).

Shirley's improved to a 23-37 slate with still three matches left in its schedule. TAGA Badminton Club (6-24) completes the field and results of its duel against the tourney leader Saipan Badminton Club will be reported in Saipan Tribune's Friday issue.

Only the Top 4 teams after the round-robin play will advance to the next round of the Traders Insurance tournament and so the last two weeks of competition will be crucial in determining the semis qualifiers.

4 SAIPAN

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vorite. Other than two dips, the road was well-paved the whole way and engulfed by jungle with occasional ocean views. There were barely any cars on the road so it was much more peaceful and safe than what I am used to. The run was also along the ocean with plenty of shade from the towering trees lining the course," said Sean Smith, who was one of the four first-timers in the annual race and was also the top finisher among the eight Saipan athletes who competed in the 1.5-kilometer swim, 40K bike, and 10K run.

Joining Smith in last Sunday's race were fellow newbies Jeff El-Hajj, Eileen Escudero-Wisor, and QuynhChi Nguyen and returnees Joshua Berger, Paul Plunkett, Daniel Calvo, and Florence Antonio.

"The best part of the triathlon experience was sharing it with seven other CNMI competitors. It was truly a team effort as each person contributed with making arrangements, transporting bodies and equipment, putting the bikes together, providing racing tips, and encouragement and just having a good time," he added.

Smith was the No. 15 overall finisher out of 81 in the A type race after clocking in at 2:49:35 He completed the swim leg at the East Harbor in 43:12, timed in at 1:24:59 in the bike, and 41:24 in the run part to become Saipan's best finisher.

He could have had a better time if not for an early crash in the bike leg.

"I crashed within 5 minutes of starting the bike leg. I tried avoiding the dip in the road by jumping the curb to the side but I failed miserably. I received only minor injuries but I did take a hard shot to my pride. Right after I fell, I jumped back on the bike and kept going because that is what being a triathlete is all about," he said.

The three other first-timers had crash-free races and same stories to tell.

"It is a must do race if you live in the CNMI. This was my first triathlon so I had no expectations and would have been happy to just finish the race. The entire event was very well organized and we had perfect weather on race day. There were over 160 competitors so we got to meet a lot of great athletes and friendly people from both Japan and Rota. Also, I ended up beating all my goal times for each event, so I couldn't have been more elated by the end," said Nguyen, who finished the race in 4:15:26.

She added she loved the swim leg the most.

"The swim was my favorite, beautiful blue water, perfect temperature and amazingly clear visibility, over 100 feet deep and you could see all the way to the bottom," said Nguyen who timed in at 51:23 in the swim leg. "The bike leg was long and a little grueling on the uphill, but we got a view of the pretty coastline the entire way. The run was really nice with some parts through shady jungle and other parts along a cliff line with a view of the ocean and wedding cake mountain."

El-Hajj posted the second fastest time among the newbies with his 2:58:50, but had the best time in the swim leg at 29:22.

"The swim leg was relatively calm with approximately 50 foot visibility to the bottom of the lagoon," said El-Hajj, who recorded 1:27:57 and 1:03:31 in the bike and run legs.

Escudero-Wisor enjoyed both the swim and bike legs before getting into trouble early in the run part.

"My legs felt like cement when I started the run but loosened up around mile 3," she said. " It was a beautiful weekend with great people and tons of encouragement and support. I would love to spend more time on Rota."

Meanwhile, the leader of the Saipan group, Berger, registered the fifth fastest time on the team with his 3:04:29 (39:16/1:28:39/56:34), while Antonio (2:55:07) placed second behind Smith. Plunkett came in at fourth (No. 26 overall) with his 3:03:01, while Calvo submitted 3:15:57 (No. 47). Japan's Tomokazu Fukushima was the overall top finisher with a time of 2:13:14.

"Congratulations to the Saipan Team, everyone did great! Special thanks to Joshua Berger for being the best coach these last three months and to Florence Antonio for being our awesome bike mechanic during the race weekend," Nguyen said.

A-TEAMS

From Page 28

perspective across the board.

In the end, the A-Teams brought their A-games and both teams held off late rally cries by the opposing B-Teams.

The matches resulted in U16's A-Team defeating its B counterparts, 72-64, after which U20's A-Team hung on over the B-Team, 70-65.

U16's A-Team was made up of Rollers 1's Prince Factor, Emerson Feria, J.P. Iglesias, Irvyn Malonzo, and C.J. Morales, Hi-5's Michael Ariaga, Jethro Cruz, and Wilfrdo Francisco with the CNMI Girls Jr. National Team's Madeline Alegre and Glorily Williams.

U20's A-Team members include Sonics' Jimmy Tudela, Jaymark De Guzman, Bryl Alegre, and Jack Aranda with Oleai Ol'Aces' Joseph Aguilar and Ryan Ichihara, and Rollers 1's Erik Dela Rosa and LD Prime's Carl Aldan.

In the U16 curtain raiser, A-Team's Feria, Iglesias, and Williams all struck from behind the arch to give their team an early 17-14 edge in the first quarter, but the B-Team stuck around through the second period as it remained a one-basket contest, 29-27, in favor of A-Team at midpoint.

Kobee Mendoza delivered a handful of checks in the exchange, while teammate Ediberto Javier III headed the squad with 6 points in the half.

Feria led the A-Team with 7 markers in the first two frames, but was held to only a bucket in the third quarter.

Nonetheless, his teammates Morales and Malonzo filled the void to keep them in control heading into crunch time. The former darted for 5 points just after the break, while the latter drained a pair of treys at the end of the period.

B-Team flirted with a 30-point explosion in the fourth quarter, but was nowhere to be found on the defensive end as A-Team countered with a case to put it away.

Morales, who has a knack for showing up in the clutch, rang in a couple long balls just as the crowd filed in for the U20 game and clipped teammate Feria on the boxscore for a game-high total of 17 points. Javier III led B-Team on the short end with 14.

Then in the U20 tiff, A-Team's Aranda and De Guzman bagged a couple of buckets in the opening 10 minutes that afforded the team a 12-6 advantage and teammates Bryle Alegre and Erik Dela Rosa hooked up for 14 points in the second frame to preserve the margin, 28-22, at the half.

Shane Deleon Guerrero-Diaz paced B-Team with 6 markers in the first half, however the team struggled to find its rhythm with all the new faces and appeared out of sync early in the game.

B-Team tried to feed off each other, but the disconnection continued through the third period as A-Team remained at the helm, 49-41, heading into the last canto.

A-Team center Tudela got involved in the third quarter stand and bulldozed his way to 6 points and a trio of 3-pointers by Alegre, Dela Rosa, and Aldan neutralized B-Team's comeback attempt.

B-Team's Malonzo came off the bench in the final minutes and scrambled for 7 checks, but the team simply ran out of time.

He led the group with 14 marks, however Alegre and Dela Rosa were a pair of beasts down low for A-Team and combined for a stout 33 points.

U16 GAME

A-Team 72 – Morales 17, Feria 16, Ariaga 12, Malonzo 10, Williams 7, Alegre 4, Iglesias 4, W Francisco 2.

B-Team 64 – Javier III 14, Fidelino 10, T Palacios 9, Mendoza 7, Abrams 6, Camacho 4, De Leon 4, Ito 4, Manlili 4, Espinosa 2.

Scoring by quarters: 17-14, 29-27, 48-37, 72-64.

U20 GAME

A-Team 70 – Alegre 17, Dela Rosa 16, Aranda 8, Deguzman 8,Tudela 8, Ichihara 6, Aldan 5, Aguilar 2.

B-Team 65 – Malonzo 14, Faisao 9, Deleon Guerrero-Diaz 8, Feria 8, J Palacios 7, Santos 7, Lampkin 6, Espinosa 4, Mettao 2.

Scoring by quarters: 12-6, 28-22, 49-41, 70-65.

MP UNITED

From Page 28

tine Maria Castro made the first one, while Chloe Salvosa and Krizel Tuazon drilled the next two to tie the game at 3-all midway in the second half.

Rona Rojas then put Tan Holdings in the lead with her goal in the 43rd minute, but Paire equalized behind Borja's fourth goal about two minutes later.

Meanwhile, Paire also settled for a draw in its game against IFC-2 last Friday.

Semona Igama and Clarissa Mobel netted one goal each for Paire, while IFC-1 drew one goal apiece from Windy Orcine and Maryfern Urena.

DIVISION A
Shirley's 11, MP United 2

In the first Division A game last Friday, Shirley's rout MP United.

Lalaine Pagarao had a hat-trick, Alexa Vergara, Melody Johnson, and Marielle Gariguez added two goals each, while Mikky Vargas and Jeraldine Castillo contributed one apiece to whip MP United.

Negahr Rastguiy scored the first goal for MP United, which led right into the first minute of the match before Shirley's started dominating the game two minutes later. Jayda Mendoza tallied the other goal for MP United.

IFC 3, Paire 1

The other Division A match last weekend had IFC beating Paire.

Sara and Terra Allen, and Pratoom Stoffer scored for IFC, while Norleen Siech posted the only goal for Paire.

Paire connected the first goal in the game with Siech eluding her defenders in the 10th minute. Sara Allen then tied the match two minutes later and with three minutes left before the first half ended, Terra Allen got her first goal to put IFC in the lead. Stoffer gave IFC the insurance in the 37th minute.

19th SSC All Schools Swimming Championships

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Swimmers get ready for the start of the 100m breaststroke race in the 19th SSC All Schools Swimming Championships held early this month at the Kan Pacific Swimming Pool in Marpi.

Whispering Palms coach Jeff Race extends a helping hand to his swimmer.

Volunteer timers press the clock, as swimmers plunge into the pool.

Swimmers do stretching drills while waiting for the start of the race.

A swimmer wait for the start of the 50m backstroke event.

Kagman Elementary School's Michael Villagomez gasps for air during the 200m freestyle race.

Two swimmers race back to the finish/starting wall.

Whispering Palms' Blake Mister competes in the 50m backstroke race.

A swimmer breathes during the 100m freestyle event.

Saipan Community School's Kento Akimaru nears completion of the 100m breaststroke race.

Lakers hold off Nets, win

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Harbaugh undergoing follow-up evaluation on heart

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Shirley's outclasses Berks Blazers

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Shirley's Badminton Club pulled off an upset over last year's finalists the Berks Blazers, 18-12, in Week 3 of the 2012 Traders Insurance Badminton Team Tournament.

Shirley's topped three mixed doubles matches and won two women's doubles and one men's to hand the Berks Blazers back-to-back losses in the team tournament. The Blazers also bowed to defending champion Saipan Badminton Club in Week 2, 9-21, while Shirley's dropped its debut against Golden Racquets, 5-25.

Toshiko Obata and Brandon Talania led Shirley's big win over the Berks Blazers, as they had three matches each and prevailed in all their Week 2 assignments. Obata teamed up with Brandon Talania in the mixed BC and they

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Shirley's Badminton Club's Ezekiel Macario goes for a backhand return during his and Hapi Gabriel's doubles match against TAGA's Ariel Mariano and Andreau Galvez in the Traders Insurance tournament last Sunday at the TSL Sports Complex.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

4 Saipan bets debut in Rota Blue

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The members of the Saipan Team to the 2012 Rota Blue Triathlon pose for a group photo after completing the race last Saturday.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Four Saipan residents got their first taste of the Rota Blue Triathlon and relived their experience in last weekend's race.

"It was a great race. The course is majestic. Each leg of the race was its own special adventure. For the swim leg, the ocean was calm with easy rolling swells and crystal clear blue water. The next leg, bike, was my fa-

See 4 SAIPAN on Page 26

A-Teams triumph in Rotary all-star games

By WALTER CEPEDA-SUTHERLAND
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REPORTER

The U16 and U20 age division's A-Teams reigned supreme in last Monday's 21st Annual Rotary Club of Saipan Youth Basketball League season-ending all-star games at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Both games played out pretty loose until the fourth quarter where the notion of seizing bragging rights came into

See A-TEAMS on Page 26

WALTER CEPEDA SUTHERLAND

Team A's Erik Dela Rosa scoops a shot around a pair of Team B defenders during Monday's Rotary Club of Saipan Youth Basketball League U20 all-star game at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

MP United-1 wins battle of sister teams

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Zena Demapan was on target in MP United-1's 7-2 victory over sister team MP United-1 in Division B of the 2012 NMIFA Women's Futsal Fall League last Monday night at the TSL Sports Complex.

Demapan nailed four goals in MP United-1's easy win, including three straight in the first half. Demapan scored in the 7th, 9th, and 12th minute, while Mei Demapan and Fish Wang added one goal apiece to give MP United-1 a 5-1 halftime lead. Amy Weis made the lone goal for MP United-2's in the 5th minute.

Weis found the back of the net anew for MP United-2 in the second half, but Demapan and Wang also lit up the scoreboard in the final frame to complete MP United-1's rout.

IFC-1 2, Matansa 0

In the second game last Monday, IFC-1 shut out Matansa.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

MP United-1 players are seen here trying to keep the ball out during their game against Matansa in Division B of the NMIFA futsal league last week at the TSL Sports Complex. MP United dropped that match, but bounced back against sister team MP United-2 last Monday.

Neither team scored in the first frame and Matansa and IFC-1 continued to struggle in the first 10 minutes of the second half before Maryana Gramlich broke the ice in the 12th minute. Maryana's mother, Temary, then made it back-to-back for IFC-1 when she got her first goal two minutes later.

Tan Holdings 4, Paire 4

The last match last Monday ended in a draw.

Guinivere Borja was a one-woman show for Paire, scoring all her team's four goals, while Tan Holdings got goals from four different players. Chris-

See MP UNITED on Page 26